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THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
499 South Capitol Street, S.W.
Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone: (202) 554-1222

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

By Jim Simon

SUGAR - *"THE REAL STUFF"*
The Newest Imitator
The Passing of Two Legends

Scientists have tried for more than one hundred years and they are yet to come up with an adequate substitute for "The Real Stuff." Sugar sets the "white" gold standard for all sweeteners both nutritive and non-nutritive.

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review recently conducted a blind taste test that pitted sucralose, aspartame, and saccharin, (Splenda, Equal and Sweet'N Low) against cane sugar. The goal was to see if the three artificial sweeteners –in forms that measure like sugar, cup for cup—could approximate sugar's qualities and sweetness.

"BLEAH"

This is not what the manufacturers of artificial sweeteners want to hear about there products. By a large margin the "*THE REAL STUFF"* won. The imitators were plagued by over sweetness or under sweetness, and off-flavors, especially unpleasant aftertaste.

As the old saying goes "the proof is in the pudding." Pudding was one of the foods used in the test. Consensus from the testers was positive for sugar. One tester wrote about the pudding made using sugar "This tastes like real pudding!"

The Newest Imitator

Our newest imitator is sucralose, also known as Splenda. It is an artificial sweetener produced through a patented process that adds chlorine atoms to sucrose. Sucralose was discovered in 1976 through a joint research project between Tate & Lyle and researchers at the University of London. The Food and Drug Administration approved sucralose for use in the United States in April of 1998. Johnson and Johnson's McNeil Specialty Products Company has a license agreement with Tate & Lyle to manufacture and market sucralose.

Sucralose belongs to a category of sweeteners called "non-nutritive," meaning that they do not provide a significant number of calories. In contrast "nutritive" sweeteners do provide calories.

Sucralose is formed through a manufacturing process that substitutes 3 chlorine atoms for the hydroxyl (hydrogen and oxygen) group on a sugar molecule. The tight molecular bond between the chlorine atoms and the rest of the sugar molecule results in a very stable molecule. This means that it is not metabolized in the body for calories and it can be processed and used in many different types of food applications.

With regards to safety very little information exists except for studies that were commissioned by organizations standing to gain from the acceptance of sucralose. Although sucralose is "derived from sugar" it is a highly processed additive created from the manipulation of molecules.

"Tastes like sugar because it's made from sugar" proclaims the distributors of sucralose. This misrepresentation has played well with

consumers for the time being, but the public is beginning to realize that it is certainly not "THE REAL STUFF."

The Passing of Two Legends

The Louisiana Sugar Industry has lost two legends within the last month. Mr. James H. Thibaut passed away on Monday, August 23 and Mr. Gilbert Durbin passed away on Wednesday, September 15.

Mr. Thibaut played a very instrumental role in the success of the American Sugar Cane League for four decades, and was thought of highly by all in the Louisiana Sugar Industry. He served on the Board of Directors of the League from September, 1951 until February, 1991, and as its President from October, 1971 to September, 1973. He also chaired numerous committees, such as the National Legislative Committee, Finance Committee and others.

Mr. Durbin served as the League's General Manager from October, 1951 until January, 1979. During this time, he dedicated his life to the service of the Louisiana sugar industry and American agriculture. He led the Louisiana sugar industry through thick and thin, through one crisis after another. He was well known for his superior intelligence, unquestioned integrity, and remarkable ability to recognize problems and find solutions to them.

The most ironic thing about these two gentlemen passing within one month of each other is that they *both* received the Outstanding Service Member Award at the Annual Membership Meeting of the League in February, 2000. These gentlemen will long be remembered for their extensive knowledge and dedication to the Louisiana Sugar Industry.

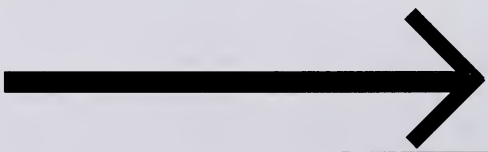
The members of the Board of Directors and staff of the American Sugar Cane League express our heartfelt sympathies to the families of Mr. Thibaut and Mr. Durbin.

CAFTA Petition

The American Sugar Beet Growers Association began a CAFTA petition a few months ago. They have garnered 25,000 signers to the petition. American Sugar Cane League President, John Gay, has challenged the Louisiana sugar industry and all interested parties to surpass the beet growers with **30,000 signers.**

On the following page you will find the CAFTA petition. If you have not signed the petition as of yet, please get your family, friends, employees, vendors, etc. to sign on. We only have a little time left.

Please make copies of the next page. Fill out the sheet and send it back to the American Sugar Cane League as soon as possible.



Dear President Bush:

We, the undersigned farmers, factory workers, company employees, bankers, support industries and concerned citizens of the sugar industry in the State of Louisiana, vehemently oppose your Administration's efforts in the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and other pending free trade negotiations that threaten our market, U.S. sugar policy and the future viability of our industry. We are strongly urging our Members of Congress to make every effort to defeat the CAFTA and any other harmful trade agreements.

Signature	*Date*	*Printed name*	*Complete address*

Return signed petition (even if partially filled) **no later that October 8, 2004** to the American Sugar Cane League, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 or to your local sugar mill office.

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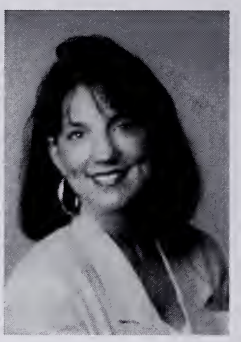

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Election Opportunities
Senate Subcommittee Approves Ag Appropriations
Ability To Market Change Announced
Breaux Report Shows Spike in SCP Imports
USDA WASDE September Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

Whether you make your living on a farm, in a mill, in a manufacturing plant, in a truck, or are employed in a host of other jobs that are dependent upon a strong, vibrant sugar industry, you have a huge stake in the outcome of the November and, presumably, December elections. I hope that each of you will think very seriously about the issues confronting you, your industry, your state and this great nation. The election season's final stretch will offer many opportunities to communicate your message to future leaders of the state and the nation, and I urge you to utilize each and every occasion to remind the political hopefuls that your livelihood matters and your vote counts.

Senate Subcommittee Approves Ag Appropriations

The Senate agricultural appropriations subcommittee approved a FY05 agricultural spending package in early September and full committee approval of the package could be completed at any time. However, with only a few work days before the early October recess target, the House and Senate leadership will more likely complete action on a continuing resolution to avoid protracted appropriations battles prior to the elections. The Senate agricultural spending package contains the base funding for Houma research projects and purportedly contains the $3 million allocation for construction of new lab facilities.

The Senate also followed the lead of the House in reducing funding for bioenergy programs to $100 million from the $150 million authorized in the farm bill. No amendments on payment limitation were offered but we will continue to follow the progress of the bill as it moves to the Senate floor.

Ability To Market Change Announced

Changes to the definition of "ability to market" factor for determining cane allocations were included in a Federal Register notice on September 13th, implementing a change that was agreed to by the cane sector in August meetings. The changes clarify the "ability to market" language of the farm bill, establishes a new formula for determining processor allocations and brings increased stability to the cane sector allotment system. For Louisiana, allotments will be based on a simple average of (1) the 2003 crop production numbers utilized in making

WASDE projections in July 2004 and (2) the Olympic average (throwing out the high and low year) of production in 1999-2003.

Breaux Report Shows Spike in SCP Imports

The Administration's latest report on potential circumvention products shows a dramatic and troublesome spike in "thick juice" from beets, along with increases in cane molasses and syrup mixtures. While the Administration's report, required by the Anti-circumvention amendment Senator John Breaux sponsored as a part of the Trade Promotion Authority legislation, indicates that the Administration has no plans to suggest legislative steps to correct the program, we will continue to closely monitor the situation and take whatever steps that are needed to address attempts to circumvent the sugar import quota system.

USDA WASDE September Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its September World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 was little changed, except for a 10,000 ton increase in production, 7,000 tons additional beet production and 3,000 tons of cane. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged at 1,458,000 short tons.

For 2004/05, total production was slashed to 8,536,000 short tons from 8,587,000 short tons in August, with a 26,000 ton increase in beet production more than offset by a 77,000 ton decrease in cane production. Louisiana production was reduced to 1,526,000 short tons from 1,562,000 short tons last month. Hawaiian production was reduced by 25,000 and Texas was reduced by 16,000, but no change was made to Florida in this pre-hurricane estimate. Imports, exports and deliveries were unchanged at 1,629,000 short tons, 200,000 short tons, and 9,905,000 respectively, leaving total use at 10,105,000. The ending stocks projection was increased to 2,229,000 from 2,270,000, and the stocks to use ratio was reduced to 22.1 percent from 22.5 percent.

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report - Canal Point, FL
Smoke Management
Cane Burning Litigation - The Importance of Record Keeping

Sunday and Monday, September 12 and 13, it appeared that Hurricane Ivan and its 135 mph winds were going to defy all of the meteorologists' predictions. It seemed as if the storm was headed up the Mississippi River to New Orleans and the eastern half of the Louisiana sugar industry. Tuesday and Wednesday as the hurricane passed near the toe of this state, the eye of the hurricane started a slow turn to a more northerly tract and in doing so bypassing New Orleans and the sugarcane fields of Louisiana. From this storm, most of the industry received winds in the 25 – 35 mph range, with little or no rain. Throughout the cane belt, only a minimum amount of cane was blown over. This industry should be very thankful that we did not receive a direct hit from the storm. If Ivan had come to Louisiana it would have dealt a very devastating blow to this industry - perhaps one from which some in the industry would not have recovered.

Growth and cane height reported for plant cane and first stubble at the UDSA Ardyone farm are average to somewhat above average. These reports indicate that the Houma area has received sufficient rain throughout the growing season. However, the opposite is true for the reports that are coming from the LSU Iberia Station. Because of the lack of rain, the growth reports from this station for the month of August have been about half of normal. For August 12th through the 18th, the growth for LCP 85-384 plant cane and second stubble was reported to be 0.28 and 0.61 **inches per week** respectively. During the last week of August the station received a significant rain (2.25 inches) and the growth measurements reported following the rain were more in the range of normal growth for this time of year, 0.50 to 0.75 **inches per day**.

A few of the industry's mills are scheduled to open during the week of Monday, September 20. Here along the Teche, the lack of good growing conditions is very obvious to growers who are now in the process of checking fields in which they will be starting harvest. Growers are reporting short, light, and extremely small diameter stalks. Throughout the state, most growers are reporting a crop that is somewhat lighter than average. The industry is hoping for a low cost harvest that comes with an erect crop. Additionally, there is an expectation that the sugar recoveries at the mill will be above average, which will help make up for some of the reduction in tonnage.

At the writing of this article on September 16, 2004, only a small percentage of the state's acreage remains to be planted. Most of this remaining acreage was planted with later-maturing varieties of soybeans. Growers have reported bean yields of 28 – 45 bushels per acre. After the application of Gramoxon, a few growers got impatient with beans that would not dry, plowed them under, and planted cane in these fields immediately after doing so. Much of the acreage that grew beans was planted right behind the harvester, which did not allow any time for the bean residue to decompose. In previous years when growers have rushed to plant cane behind beans, the resulting plant cane stands have been somewhat weak. Hopefully, this year's planting will not suffer from this rush to plant.

Canal Point, FL

The USDA Canal Point, FL Sugarcane Breeding Station has contributed greatly to the commercial varieties grown here in Louisiana. In the 50's, because of the vision of this industry, the League secured funding from Congress and provided some funding itself for a crossing house and personnel at the Canal Point station. The breeding program at Canal Point has provided seed for all three mainland sugarcane-growing states. Barry Glaz (Acting Research Leader) reports that the station took a relatively serious hit from Hurricane Frances. It appears that the eye wall passed directly over Canal Point with winds in the 90 to 100 mph range. Varieties used during the crossing season are grown either in racks or on carts. The canes on the carts can be moved in and out of the photoperiod house or the greenhouses, which provides protection from the elements. There was little or no damage to the green houses, photoperiod house, or the breeding canes that were placed in them. Likewise, there was little damage to the other buildings at the facility. Of the canes that could not be moved indoors for protection, about half were left standing in the outdoor racks and the remainder was laid over on the ground. About 80% of the canes left standing had the tops broken. The canes were on the ground for only a couple of days, but in that time the tops started to turn up. When the laid-over canes were placed back on the racks about 20% of the tops broke. The remainder appears to be very tender and must be handled with care.

The station's generator was serviced and running before Hurricane Frances; however, after the storm the station's technicians were unable to get it to start and had to obtain a new generator. Without electricity the timing of the photoperiod treatment was interrupted and will affect the synchronization of the flowering of these canes. Additionally, without electricity there was no water available to irrigate the breeding canes on the racks or in the houses. US Sugars provided a water wagon with which the station's personnel were able to water the breeding canes. In case the station cannot produce seed for one reason or another, there is a reserve of seed kept in freezers at Canal Point. Because of the multi-day power loss due to the hurricane, germination tests are being conducted on this seed to check its viability. Before each year's crossing season, the breeders take stock of varieties available for crossing and make a list of the crosses they wish to make with each available variety. There are (for most varieties) multiple cans planted for each variety on the crossing list. Because of this duplication, the breeders should be able to make about 80% or so of the crosses that were slated for this year. Furthermore, the excess seed from the last ten years of crosses made at Canal Point are stored in freezers at the Houma station. If needed, the seed stored in the freezer at Houma can be taken from the freezer and planted in the greenhouse to produce seedlings from good commercial crosses. Another possible way to supplement this year's seed production would be to make a few needed commercial crosses at the Houma station. Normally, in an effort to widen the gene pool and inject traits found in wild cane, the crossed at the Houma station are crosses between commercial type and wild type cane. By making crosses of two commercial type canes, the Houma station could add to the number of seed available for planting in their green houses in the spring of 2005. Additionally there is the possibility, if needed, that excess

seeds could be obtained from the crosses made at the LSU St. Gabriel Station. All in all, there should be little or no reduction in the number of seedlings planted in the field at Houma in 2005.

Smoke Management

With harvest at hand, growers are reminded of the importance of continuing their good record of reducing the number of smoke and ash complaints. Over the last three years, there have been very few complaints to either the ASCL or the LDAF. Most of the improvement in the public's interaction with cane smoke is due to the industry's adherence to the voluntary BMP's in the "Louisiana Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting." There are seven steps included in the prescribed burning of sugarcane. The recommended procedures are:

Step 1. Identify Areas Sensitive to Smoke and Ash
Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast
Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan
Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day
Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance
Step 6. Determine Trajectory of Smoke and Ash Plume
Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results

A full explanation for each step can be found in the "Louisiana Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting." Growers should refresh their memories of each step by rereading the booklet. The importance of step 3, keeping good records, is well illustrated in the article "Cane Burning Litigation – The Importance of Record Keeping" which was written by the ASCL's Chairman of the Board, John Gay. The article was published in the November 2003 issue of the Sugar Bulletin and is reprinted below.

Editor s Note: The following article was published in the November 2003 issue of The Sugar Bulletin. It is being reprinted for your information.

Cane Burning Litigation - The Importance of Record Keeping

In September of 1999 our company was sued as a result of our practice of cane burning. The unexpected suit was initiated by an asthma sufferer who, one year earlier on Oct. 14, 1998, was hospitalized with an asthma attack. This began nearly four years of legal twists and turns, the ordeal culminating with a week long jury trial in the Eighteenth Judicial District Court held in Plaquemine during July 2003.

The plaintiff claimed that on the day of her hospitalization she had been working in her yard when she noticed soot and ash falling around her. Her husband, a house painter, claimed he was also working at home on cabinet doors for a customer when ash began falling on his paint job. He claimed to have driven to look for the source of the ash while his wife continued to do the yard work. Although their property is located almost five miles from our farm, he stated that he followed the ash plume to a field adjacent to our farm shop. He took pictures of a burning field, focusing his camera so to include in the pictures buildings on our property adjacent to the field. He stated in the trial that the pictures were evidence for him to make a claim against us for damages to his paint job.

Later that afternoon the wife had an asthma attack. Despite self treatment with an inhaler, she became seriously ill and was rushed to the emergency room that night by her husband, arriving there unconscious. Thankfully, because of the skills and quick response of the emergency room staff, she was resuscitated. The seriousness of the attack caused her to remain in the hospital for five days and accumulate sizable medical bills.

Fortunately, our company had liability coverage with a well established insurance company within the state. We contacted them after being served with court papers nearly one year later, and informed them of the details as we knew them. The insurance company assigned a very capable attorney who began preparing a case for our defense. The attorney first asked for our records of fields burned on October 14, 1998. Of course, like most farmers in 1998, we

did not keep records of fields burned during harvest. We did, however, keep a spread sheet of yield records on each field including the date harvested, the variety, the year, etc. This information became invaluable to our defense.

During the discovery process leading up to the trial, the plaintiffs' attorney hired investigators to go door to door. These investigators were seeking specific negative experiences by people in the surrounding area concerning our burning of cane. They also asked if these neighbors had ever complained directly to any owner or employee of our company about our practice of cane burning. Additionally, advertisements were placed in the Plaquemine and Baton Rouge newspapers by the attorneys seeking the same information from readers throughout a wider area. These were obviously attempts to move this litigation into a class action status.

Requests for information on every facet of our operation seemed to never end. We spent many hours and days compiling this information. The plaintiffs requested all of our financial statements and tax returns for a five year period. Our defense attorney attempted to block this request by appealing to the court. First the district court denied our attempt to block this request, followed by the court of appeals, and finally in a split decision the Louisiana Supreme Court voted to require us to turn over the information. This ruling was a significant loss for our side.

After almost four years from the time we were initially sued, the case finally went to court on July 28, 2003. A jury of twelve people was selected, and expert witnesses were called from such places as South Carolina and British Columbia. These experts represented a wide variety of disciplines to include: pulmonology, psychology, nursing, family medicine, meteorology, agronomy, agricultural economics, accounting, and social work. A great number of resources were brought to bear by both sides as everyone recognized the precedent setting nature of the case.

During the week long trial, testimony was given to establish timelines for the day the wife was admitted to the hospital. The husband claimed to have taken the pictures of the burning field on that day at around noon, however, there was no date printed on his pictures. Our yield records showed the field in the pictures was harvested over a week later on October 22 and 23. Normal procedure would have us burn that field one day earlier on October 21. **Without these written records the jury would have accepted the husband's testimony.** Instead, a great deal of doubt was cast on the plaintiffs' entire case.

After five days of trial, the jury deliberated for only one hour. They returned a unanimous verdict in our favor.

There are many lessons to be learned through this experience, for our company, and the whole Louisiana sugar industry. Important among them is the realization that trial lawyers and members of the general public are willing to spend great amounts of money to stop the burning of cane. Farmers and mill operators together must recognize this threat and take every precaution to minimize it. Smoke management guidelines have been developed for the cane industry. For our individual protection and the protection of the entire industry, we must follow these guidelines and record every step of our burning operations. Accurate record keeping is vital. Before you light the match, be conscious of the impact the burn will have down wind. We need to police ourselves before the courts or the legislature do the policing for us.

We are all fortunate and privileged to have access to liability insurance coverage at reasonable rates. We cannot take this coverage for granted. The careless actions of one farmer can cause all farmers to loose this vital coverage.

I cannot thank enough those defense witnesses who gave so much time and effort toward this victory. I am also grateful to our insurance company Farm Bureau Insurance for the decision to go to trial rather than settling out of court. Our attorneys Stacey Moak and Associates did an excellent job of defending us and deserve a great deal of thanks as well.

Let this experience be a lesson to us all and let us work together by following the smoke management guidelines to protect our legal right to burn cane.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Energy And The Environment

An adequate and reliable supply of energy is essential for a modern society to function peacefully and prosper. The most important energy source in America is that supplied by the public electric power utilities that now serve nearly 100 percent of the urban and populated rural areas of the U.S.A. The recent spate of hurricanes entering through the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts damaged and disrupted electric power service over wide areas for prolonged periods, knocking out public water supply, sewerage, refrigeration for food preservation, and power ventilation and air conditioning. Lawful commerce ceases in the storm devastated areas. While the first priority after storm damage is to rescue survivors and provide essential food, drinking water and shelter, the second is to restore electric power service because that is what is absolutely essential for restoration of a functioning local economy and a safe and healthy environment in the storm-affected areas.

The economic impact of electric power supply is not merely a local matter of concern. Adequate electric power supply is an essential for the industrial and business activities upon which the national economy thrives. Politicos can rant on and on and opine about job creation or the failure of rival politicos to create needed jobs, but if sufficient and reliable electric power is not available in the unemployment target areas, "permanent" jobs cannot be created.

A much smaller but very important energy supply source for America is crude petroleum. Crude oil is processed to produce gasoline, diesel and jet fuels, petro-chemicals and boiler fuel to heat homes, businesses and industrial processes. While fuel oil is now seldom used for electric power generation, and accounts for a much smaller amount of total energy consumption, oil has become of great concern to the public because of observed economic impact of high and rising gasoline prices, the nation's depleting petroleum reserves and growing dependence on imported oil.

Fuel consumption (energy) in general, not just for the generation of electric power, has environmental consequences. Combustion of fuels releases air pollutants, some fuels more than others, depending upon impurities in the fuels and combustion techniques employed. The production (mining and processing) of fuels can also have environmental consequences. Therefore, environmentalists use every means available to them to influence public opinion as well as national, state, and local regulatory authorities on energy matters, and often not in the best interests of the general public. The recent environmentalist lawsuit compelling the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to impose "reformulated gasoline" on the Baton Rouge Metropolitan area, for instance.

The national energy situation has been in a crisis for years, due to depleting domestic petroleum (including natural gas) supplies, increased energy consumption, and a high and growing dependence on imported petroleum originating in the unstable Middle East. Threats there, reducing or disrupting oil flow and damaging world economy and endangering

national security, have caused armed conflicts, some not as yet resolved. Arab oil profits financed much if not most of the troublemaking and U.S. dependency on that Middle East oil gets much of the blame for military interdictions there. Military measures may bring temporary relief, but the overall national energy crisis will not be resolved until there is no U.S. dependency on Middle East oil. A stable energy supply for the nation can only be achieved by developing domestic energy resources and reasonable energy conservation measures.

With the current Iraq situation and National energy policy and program in a shambles, one would think that energy would be foremost on the nation's political agenda. There have been somewhat vague statements on energy policy by both major presidential candidates, but nothing really substantive. Early this year, a comprehensive energy bill addressing most of the energy problems and needs passed the U.S. House of Representative by a wide margin. However, the bill has been stalled in the Senate over issues supposedly related to the environment rather than the desperately needed energy measures. There was some hope that the Senate would get right back to work on the energy bill after the mid-summer (political convention) recess, but as of late September there has been no progress on the bill.

The energy bill under consideration in Congress is very important to the sugar cane industry because of support therein for biomass fuels such as bagasse and cane-field trash, cogeneration of electricity and the production and use of fuel-grade ethanol. Biomass and alcohol fuels are renewable fuel resources that have no affect on "global warming" and have lower pollutant emissions in comparison to fossil fuels. These bill provisions are clearly environment friendly.

It now appears that there will be no action on the energy bill until after the November elections, and maybe not before next year. There seems to be a political "Mexican Standoff" over environmental issues such as:

- The House Bill's exempting manufacturers of MTBE from environmental lawsuits over environmental pollution caused by other parties. Environmentalist Senators refuse to approve the bill unless MTBE exemptions are removed, which the House indicates is not acceptable.
- The House Bill favors continued use of coal fuel, primarily because the nation has centuries of coal reserves available. Environmentalist Senators, including some from coal producing states, would prefer to avoid voting an energy bill before elections because environmentalists hate coal worse than sin and may take revenge on those voting for such a bill.
- The Bill promotes drilling of oil and gas wells whereas environmentalists oppose any or all drilling.

Yes, the prospects of getting prompt action on the desperately needed energy bill are fading fast, and you can blame environmentalists' obstruction and meddling for the delay.

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RSD Testing Time Again

by Jeff Hoy, Lori Grelen, and Jane Paccamonti
LSU AgCenter Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology

Ratoon stunting disease (RSD) was the most important disease affecting sugarcane in Louisiana for many years. In recent times, it has been brought under control by the widespread cultivation of LCP 85-384, a variety with some resistance to RSD spread, and the planting of RSD-free seedcane produced through tissue culture. A final component to the successful management program has been the availability of disease monitoring through the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab, which began RSD testing in 1997. Testing allows farmers to determine whether this disease, which produces no external visible symptoms, is present in fields on their farms. When all of the testing information is compiled, it provides a survey of the RSD status of the Louisiana industry.

During 2003, 443 fields were sampled and tested on 78 farms. The overall stalk infection frequency was only 1%, as it has been for the last three years. The frequency of fields with some RSD infection was 9%. These results are very encouraging. This is a large enough sampling across the industry to conclude that RSD is no longer adversely affecting industry yields. One additional statistic that the testing provides is the frequency of farms that have any RSD in any field. This is the least encouraging statistic. One third of the farms tested had some detectable RSD during 2003. This means that RSD is persisting at a low level on quite a few farms, and RSD is therefore still a potential threat to the industry.

The pathogen that causes RSD occurs in the water vessels of the plant, and it builds up slowly in population inside the plant during the growing season. Plant pathologists tried for many years to develop an RSD detection method that could be used to monitor the disease for farmers. Testing methods were finally developed, and as new, more sensitive methods were developed, the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab has adopted them. However, the current method is still not sensitive enough to reliably detect the disease until after most of the planting season is over. Farmers would like to be able to make sure the seedcane they are planting is healthy by testing the actual seed just before planting. We have not been able to do this, but we have monitored the RSD status of one of the commercial seedcane sources, Kleentek®, since 1997. No RSD has ever been detected in any seedcane source of Kleentek tested, so growers can be confident that it is healthy when they purchase it.

If RSD is persisting on a farm at a low level, it will be easiest to detect in old stubble. Therefore, we recommend that farmers use the RSD testing service as a quality control program to make sure that RSD is not contaminating their cane as it is increased on the farm. This is best accomplished by testing old stubble intended for the mill. This is the cane at the end of the healthy seedcane pipeline. In addition, varieties vary in susceptibility to RSD. HoCP 91-555 is highly susceptible to RSD. Fields of this variety should definitely be monitored for RSD.

The RSD pathogen does not survive outside the plant. It is not spread by wind or insects. It is only spread mechanically, primarily by the harvester. It can be spread down the row from an infected stool to new stools during the harvesting process, and it is spread in infected seed to new fields. You cannot see RSD, so the only way to be sure it is not hanging around is to check for it.

There is no charge for RSD testing from the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab. Either your consultant or County Agent can assist you in collecting samples. A sample from a field consists of the lowest complete joint from 20 stalks collected from different plants scattered across the end of a field (or both ends of a small field). Information is needed concerning the variety, crop cycle year, and healthy seedcane history.

The testing results indicate that the long battle with RSD is being won. This is a major positive development for the industry. RSD is only spread by farming practices. This also means it can be eliminated from a farm by farming practices. **It is under your control.** A continuous healthy seedcane program is still needed. Remember that a healthy seedcane program utilizing seedcane produced through tissue culture and meeting the certification standards determined by the Louisiana State Department of Agriculture and Forestry will help to control all of the systemic diseases, including not just RSD but smut, leaf scald, mosaic and our most recent disease, yellow leaf, as well. Monitoring is a crucial component of a successful RSD management program. Monitoring is available to you at no financial cost and requires little effort on your part. All you have to do is contact your consultant or County Agent. The mission of the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab is to help Louisiana sugarcane farmers minimize losses due to diseases.

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2003.

Improving Soil Tests-Fertility for Sugarcane Production, *Jim Wang, LSU AgCenter Agronomy Department, Chuck Kennedy, LSU AgCenter Agronomy Department, Howard Viator, Iberia Research Station, Bill Hallmark, Iberia Research Station, and Ben Legendre, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service*

Evaluation of Soil Silicon Test

The purpose of this study was to develop a soil test for predicting silicon fertilization. Thirty soil samples collected from different parts of Louisiana were used for this study. The ranges of basic physical and chemical properties of the soils were: pH 5.2-7.9, organic matter 0.48 - 2.41%, phosphorus 5-481 ppm, potassium 31-261 ppm, calcium 1043-3328 ppm, and sulfur 3.6-30.4 ppm. Soil silicon was extracted with seven extractant methods and overall mean silicon values for thirty soils as well as method correlations with sugarcane yields for one field silicon fertilization study are compared in Table 1.

Table 1. Soil extractable silicon by different methods and linear correlations with cane yield

Extraction Method	Water	Ammonium acetate	Acetate buffer	Acetic acid	Hydrochloric acid	Citric acid	Mehlich III
Silicon (ppm)	19.1	28.5	45.0	70.3	105.2	174.9	540.8
Correlation (R^2)	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.05	<0.01	0.03	<0.01

The amount of soil silicon in different extractions was in the order of Mehlich III > citric acid > HCl > acetic acid >acetate buffer > NH_4OAc > H_2O. The results suggest that these extractants can basically be classified into three different categories: 1) water extractable, 2) extractable by any of HCl, citric acid, acetic acid, acetate buffer and NH_4AOc, 3) Mehlich III extractable silicon. There was no correlation between soil extractable silicon and cane yields.

Zinc Studies for Both Acid (St. Martin) and Alkaline (Iberia) Soils

One acid soil at Levert-St. John Farms, St. Martinsville and one alkaline soil at Herbert Farms, Jeanerette were selected in this study. The acid soil was a Dundee silt loam (16% clay, 63% silt, and 21% sand). Soil tests for the Dundee silt loam showed a pH of 5.40, organic matter of 1.0%, sulfur of 5.28-6.24 ppm (low) and Zn of 0.26-0.59 ppm (low), respectively. The alkaline soil was Jeanerette

silt loam (31% clay, 61% silt, and 8% sand). Soil tests for the Jeanerette silt showed a pH of 8.1, organic matter of 1.1-1.6%, sulfur of 7.26-11.52 ppm (low-medium) and Zn of 0.21-0.35 ppm (low), respectively. Both sites were conducted with LCP 85-384. All plots consisted of three 6' by 50' rows. The experiment consisted of 5 rates of solid zinc sulfate ground application and one rate of spray application. One rate of sulfur as gypsum was also used to check the effect of sulfur caused by ZnSO4. All ground treatments were applied to the inner off-bar of each plot row. All plots also received equal amounts of N and P based on soil tests. All treatments were replicated 4 times. Ground applications were carried out before May 8, 2003 and spray applications before July 3, 2003. The plots were harvested on November 14 and 19, 2003 respectively. The number of millable stalks in each sugarcane plot were counted. Twenty stalks were randomly selected from each plot to measure average stalk weight and commercially recoverable sugar (CRS). The results are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Effect of Zinc and Sulfur fertilizer on 1st stubble cane grown in acid Dundee soil

Treatment	Pop	Stalk wt.	CRS	Cane yield (weighed)	Sugar yield
Lb ZnSO4 /A	1000/A	lb/stalk	lb/T	T/A	lb/A
0	19.3	2.11	231.3	18.9	4344
4	19.7	1.83	240.5	23.4	5637
8	19.1	2.15	240.5	24.0	5763
16	19.9	1.71	234.0	19.8	4615
32	18.3	1.97	234.0	19.8	4645
Spray (0.5% ZnSO4)	20.5	1.75	240.2	23.4	5608
18 lb Sulfur /A	18.9	1.91	237.3	24.1	5709
LSD 0.05	NS	0.3	NS	5.0	1233

Table 3. Effect of Zinc and Sulfur fertilizer on 2nd stubble cane grown in alkaline Jeanerette soil

Treatment	Pop	Stalk wt.	CRS	Cane yield (estimated)	Sugar yield
Lb ZnSO4 /A	1000/A	lb/stalk	lb/T	T/A	lb/A
0	37.9	1.30	211.0	24.4	5161
4	42.9	1.45	211.4	31.1	6541
8	41.4	1.44	215.3	29.8	6384
16	41.1	1.39	213.7	28.4	6070
32	38.5	1.35	217.0	26.0	5639
Spray (0.5% ZnSO4)	38.7	1.40	211.7	27.3	5742
18 lb Sulfur /A	39.2	1.46	215.1	29.0	6243
LSD 0.05	4.4	NS	NS	5.1	1069

Ground application of ZnSO4 at 4-8 lb/A significantly increased sugar yields by 29-32% in acid Dundee soil and by 23-26% in alkaline Jeanerette soil. Application of sulfur also significantly increased sugar yield by 31% in the acid soil and 21% in the alkaline soil. Zinc Spray treatment increased yields at both sites but only statistically significant at acid soil site (by 29%). These test

results suggest that Zn application in Louisiana soils low in DTPA test- Zn benefit sugarcane production significantly.

Phosphate Study in a Silty Clay Loam at Iberia Parish

An Iberia silty clay loam at Herbert Farms was selected for this study. Soil pH ranged from 5.7-7.1, P from 60-102 ppm (low-medium), K from 114-140 (low-medium), and Zn from 0.25-0.29 ppm (low). The field study was conducted on second stubble of sugarcane LCP 85-384. Plots consisted of three 6' by 50' rows with a 10' alley separating the ends of all plots. Treatments were applied to the inner off-bar of each plot row on April 29, 2003. All plots also received 140 lb/A nitrogen, and 120 lb/A K2O. All treatments were replicated 4 times. The number of millable stalks in each sugarcane plot were counted. The plots were harvested on November 21, 2003. Ten stalks were randomly selected from each plot to measure average stalk weight and commercially recoverable sugar (CRS). The results are shown in Table 1. There was no difference in cane and sugar yields as result of phosphorus application.

Table 1. Effect of phosphorus rate on plant cane grown in an Iberia silty clay loam

Treatment	**Pop**	**Stalk wt.**	**CRS**	**Cane yield (weighed)**	**Sugar yield**
P2O5 lb/A	1000/A	lb/stalk	lb/T	T/A	lb/A
0	44.1	1.58	220.3	31.8	7008
30	45.4	1.73	214.4	29.7	6370
60	47.1	1.67	217.8	29.9	6515
90	44.9	1.76	216.9	31.3	6768
120	44.0	1.68	221.2	31.5	6966
240	47.0	1.45	211.0	31.3	6593
LSD 0.05	NS	0.2	8.6	NS	NS

Potassium Study in a Sharkey silty clay soil (St. Gabriel)

Potassium application in relatively heavy texture soils is often hard to predict. To verify current soil test for predicting K fertility in relatively heavy texture soil, a field study was conducted on Sharkey silty clay in St Gabriel Research Station. Soil analysis indicated that the site contains 103-113 ppm K (very low), 156-197 ppm P (high), and 2653-3145 ppm Ca with soil pH 5.7. Four K treatments were applied on May 6, 2003. All plots also received 120 lb N/A. The plots were harvested on November 11, 2003. The results were shown in Table 2. Potassium application did not significantly increase cane and sugar yields.

Table 2. Effect of potassium rate on a plant cane grown in an acid silty clay Sharkey soil

Treatment	Pop.	Stalk wt.	CRS	Cane yield (weighed)	Sugar yield
Lb K_2O/A	1000/A	lb/stalk	lb/T	T/A	lb/A
0	32.5	2.35	187.2	26.7	5003
60	34.2	2.10	194.8	28.2	5490
120	34.8	2.19	174.4	27.3	4762
240	35.1	2.24	180.0	26.9	4849
LSD 0.05	1.6	NS	20.2	NS	NS

Further Evaluation of High Biomass Cultivars, *Thomas Tew, Research Geneticist, Edwis Dufrene, Agronomist, Donnie Garrison, Agronomist, Michael Grisham, Research Plant Pathologist, Richard Johnson, Research Agronomist, Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist, Ed Richard, Research Leader, John Veremis, Research Geneticist William White, Research Entomologist, USDA_ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA, Gillian Eggleston, Research, USDA-ARS, SRRC, New Orleans, LA*

During November 2003, first ratoon harvest results were obtained at Diamond W Ranch at Welsh, LA and at the USDA Ardoyne Research Farm for the energy cane tests established in fall 2001. Additionally, plant harvest results were obtained at Welsh for the test established in fall 2002.

Results from these tests are shown below:

Table 1. Biomass test planted fall 2001 at Chacahoula (USDA Ardoyne Farm). First stubble harvested on October 7, 2003.

Variety	TRS	Other Sugar	Bagasse	Leafy Trash	Total Solids	Total Cane
Ho 00-961	2.40	3.02	9.72	3.24	18.37	47.06
L 79-1003	1.25	2.53	11.89	3.96	19.64	47.44
LCP 85-384	2.24	2.63	6.07	2.02	12.96	44.19
TucCP 77-42	2.22	2.38	7.92	2.64	15.16	42.00
US 01-10	1.01	2.82	13.20	4.40	21.43	54.50
US 01-12	1.63	2.78	10.20	3.40	18.01	51.00
US 01-16	1.04	2.07	9.17	3.06	15.34	37.00
Average	**1.68**	**2.60**	**9.74**	**3.25**	**17.27**	**46.17**

Table 2. Biomass test planted fall 2001 at Welch (Diamond W Ranch). First stubble harvested on November 25, 2003.

Variety	TRS	Other Sugar	Bagasse	Leafy Trash	Total Solids	Total Cane
Ho 00-961	4.78	2.58	9.01	2.25	18.62	44.71
L 79-1003	1.56	2.76	15.22	3.81	23.35	44.77
LCP 85-384	4.34	1.83	6.28	1.57	14.01	38.45
TucCP 77-42	4.12	3.00	9.37	2.34	18.83	49.11
US 01-10	1.66	2.40	12.07	3.02	19.15	43.57
US 01-12	1.87	3.59	13.18	3.29	21.93	54.01
US 01-16	1.52	2.26	11.10	2.77	17.65	37.09
Average	**2.84**	**2.63**	**10.89**	**2.72**	**19.08**	**44.53**

Table 3. Biomass test planted fall 2002 at Welch (Diamond W Ranch). Plant crop harvested on November 25, 2003.

Variety	TRS	Other Sugar	Bagasse	Leafy Trash	Total Solids	Total Cane
HoCP 91-552	2.86	1.84	6.11	1.53	12.33	31.92
L 79-1003	1.31	2.71	13.20	3.30	20.53	43.97
LCP 85-384	3.92	1.65	5.94	1.49	13.00	35.47
TucCP 77-42	4.04	2.78	8.44	2.11	17.36	47.38
US 01-10	1.55	2.70	12.21	3.05	19.51	45.24
US 01-12	1.19	3.82	11.81	2.95	19.78	51.97
US 01-16	1.67	2.92	13.45	3.36	21.40	46.91
Average	**2.36**	**2.63**	**10.17**	**2.54**	**17.70**	**43.26**

NIR Measurements for Factory Control In the Louisiana Sugar Industry, *Brian White, Audubon Sugar Institute*

Two sugar factories had interest in evaluating NIR instruments in the 2003 season; Enterprise Factory and Lafourche Sugar Corporation. Audubon purchased a Foss model 5000 NIRS with beverage analyzer attachment in 2002 and has been developing calibrations for final molasses, raw juice and syrup. The desire was to acquire Foss demo instruments for these trials, but Foss was unwilling to provide instruments without a purchase agreement. Audubon began looking to other venders and was able to find two different venders who provided instruments and a third that came to Audubon for a trial. None of these instruments, in the configuration tested were capable of consistent scans of raw juice or dilute final molasses.

Enterprise and Foss came to an agreement for the purchase of an instrument if it worked satisfactorily. The instrument was tested in the Enterprise factory control laboratory. Due to a faulty detector in the new unit, the instrument would not standardize correctly and the trial was inconclusive. The limited data acquired during the test did look promising, but insufficient data was available for conclusive results. Foss has repaired the instrument and will be at Audubon to assure that the instrument will standardize properly before it is placed back at Enterprise for further testing in 2004. It was intended to try one of the instruments from an alternative supplier at Lafourche in the core laboratory, particularly because they are cheaper than the Foss instruments. However, neither of the two alternative instruments could be calibrated satisfactorily, and the project had to be aborted.

Once the project at Enterprise has been completed, attention will again be turned to a core lab.

Factory Filter Stations, *Donal F. Day, Audubon Sugar Institute, Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station*

Efficient operation of a sugar factory requires knowledge of the points of sugar loss within the operation. An operating loss that tends to be overlooked is loss due to microbial action at the filter station. This may show up as a purity drop between the mixed juice and the filtrate and/or an increase in lactic acid levels from that of the mixed juice. The objective of this research was the establishment of baseline data on bioloading, microbial types and organic acid levels present in clear juice, filtrate and mud in Louisiana factories. The goal is to improve filter operation in Louisiana factories.

Limited work was undertaken in the 2003 season. Mud levels were low, and most mills were not washing cane, producing lower organic acid loading than in previous seasons. One mill was extensively monitored. Lactic acid levels indicated an area of potential loss between the clarifier and the filters. Given the arrangement of the filtrate return, the problem could be either in the filtrate return line or in the bagacillo addition. There was little variation between filters.

Investigation will continue in 2004 to determine whether similar situations exist at other mills.

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Enzymes and Polysaccharides, *Donal F. Day, Audubon Sugar Institute, Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station*

Goal: to assist the factories in use of enzymes, specifically dextranase.

All factories in Louisiana are using enzymes, primarily amylase. Dextran was a minimal problem, except at those mills processing cane that was hauled long distances. Visits to the mills indicated that all were doing a good job on sanitation and, except for a few spot corrections in factory sanitation procedures, biological control in 2003. Omission of cane washing in most mills helped significantly.

Recommendations for use.

Dextranase should be used as early in the process as possible. Addition at the level of the mill is recommended. Dextranase works best at pH 5.5 and at temperatures below 120°F. There is a Brix effect, such that enzyme activity is inhibited above 30 Brix. Dextran reduction appears higher than expected for the enzyme dose utilized if the Haze method is the assay of choice. Dextranase rapidly shortens the chain length of the polymers. The Haze test is not particularly sensitive to dextran sizes under 100,000.

Amylase- All Louisiana mills are using amylase, but the effectiveness of the enzyme has been questioned. If only starch ppm values in the various streams are reported, there is the appearance that this enzyme is not working. The results for starch testing must be reported on a ppm/Brix basis. When mill data is reported in this manner, it is immediately obvious that amylase works as designed.

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Juice Clarification Studies, *M Saska, Audubon Sugar Institute*

After earlier lab studies, two brief but full scale factory trials were organized to study the potential for replacing lime with soda ash. The soda ash liquor was continuously added to the cold mixed juice and the factory hot liming system then operated in automatic mode as usual. The soda ash

addition was controlled at about 0.02% to 0.04% on cane and at the higher dose was high enough so that no milk of lime needed to be added for the duration of the four-hour test.

No processing problems were noted in either test when soda ash was being used but turbidity of clarified juice increased and was at the upper limit of clarified juice turbidity range (100 to 200 NTU) usually seen in Louisiana. Whether increased turbidity of clarified juice impacts the boiling house operation is not known, but it is likely that a judicial change or adjustment of flocculant type and dose would be able to at least partially compensate for the increase. Of the cations, neither K or Mg levels were affected; Na of course increased and Ca was reduced essentially down to the levels in the incoming mixed juice. Although this represents a substantial drop of calcium levels in comparison with liming (30 to 50%), even the higher dose of soda ash did not reduce the hardness of clarified juice below that of the mixed juice as was observed in our previous laboratory tests. Anion removal was unaffected. It was confirmed that with soda ash, unlike with milk of lime, syrup pH is higher than pH of clarified juice. This is expected to have positive implications for the condensate pH and scaling in the last effects of the evaporator train.

It is concluded that use of soda ash in clarification is feasible and brings about reduction of Ca in clarified juice by some 30 to 50% with respect to liming, and more if higher pH levels of clarified juice are maintained. Whether this translates in reduced evaporator scaling can only be determined in extended factory operation. That should also involve optimization of flocculant dose and type. At the list price for "dense" soda ash of $105 the chemical cost appears to be comparable to the cost of lime, but with an additional advantage that the non-settling soda ash liquor is much easier to handle than the milk-of-lime suspension and faster to react in neutralizing the cane juice acids.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • •

Hard To Boil Molasses, *M Saska, Audubon Sugar Institute*

The weather was mostly dry during the 2003 processing season, and unlike in 2002, no boiling difficulties were experienced by the mills. For better understanding of the factors that may affect heat transfer and rate of boiling in the pans, a series of measurements were undertaken of the boiling heat transfer coefficient of Louisiana final molasses. The samples were further characterized by their viscosity v. RDS profiles, polysaccharide concentrations and cation composition.

With one exception the HTC v. RDS profiles fell within a fairly narrow range and were nearly linear in the 80 – 90 RDS range. A good correlation was found between the heat transfer characteristics and molasses consistency in the 80 to 90% RDS range. Correlations between the molasses viscosity, at constant solids levels (in the 80 – 90% RDS range), and their contents (on dry solid basis) of dextran, starch, potassium, sodium, magnesium and sodium were studied. Surprisingly, none were observed between viscosity and dextran or starch and only Ca appeared to have some effect on viscosity at 86, 88, 90 and 92% RDS levels. Whether this is somehow related to complexing between calcium, polysaccharides or other molasses components at high RDS levels is under investigation. The relationship between cane washing and boiling difficulties has been suggested, and a survey therefore, was done to provide data regarding the layout of the wash water systems at every mill and the wash water composition (pH, sugars, anions and cations). The dry weather throughout the 2003 season allowed mills at times to either completely avoid or at least reduce washing of cane for most of the season and no sugar boiling difficulties were reported by any of the mills.

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
499 South Capitol Street, S.W.
Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone: (202) 554-1222

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

Editor's Note: In recent weeks I have been questioned about marketing allotments and trade. The following article, written by Jack Roney of the American Sugar Alliance, may answer questions you have on the topic.

Sugar Marketing Allotments and Trade

Jack Roney
Director of Economics and Policy Analysis
American Sugar Alliance

My thanks to Jim Simon and the League for inviting me to write this article. And my compliments to Louisiana growers and processors for doing a fantastic job of educating their Members of Congress and the public on the dangers of the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and other potential bilateral or regional trade agreements (FTAs).

The CAFTA has been completed, but has not yet been approved by Congress. It grants an additional 120,000 short tons of sugar import access to the six CAFTA countries in the first year, an amount that grows to 169,000 tons after 15 years, and by 2,640 tons per year after that, forever. These provisions pose two levels of danger to American sugar farmers.

The **longer-term danger** comes from the probability that, if it passes, the CAFTA would be used as the template for subsequent FTAs. There are 21 sugar-exporting countries lined up like planes on a tarmac, waiting to do deals with the U.S. Their combined exports are about *25 million tons per year*, nearly triple U.S. sugar consumption. This threat is fairly obvious.

The **short-term danger**, while less obvious, is immediate, and just as pronounced. It stems from the possibility that, as early as the first year of the agreement, the additional imports from the CAFTA countries could trigger off domestic marketing allotments and allow a million tons of surplus domestic sugar that is currently blocked from the market to flood our market. LSU estimates this much surplus sugar would pound sugar prices down by nearly 30%. Few, if any, American sugar growers could survive long at such low prices.

But understanding the nature of this short-term threat to American sugar growers demands an understanding of U.S. policy and how it works. And we have to be able to describe it to U.S. lawmakers, the press, and the public. Here's how I present it:

No-cost U.S. sugar policy. In the 2002 Farm Bill, Congress passed an inventory management program for sugar and directed the Secretary of Agriculture to administer the program at no cost to taxpayers by avoiding sugar commodity-loan forfeitures. The policy provides a non-recourse loan program. As with all U.S. commodity loan programs, producers may satisfy their loans by repaying the loan with interest, or by forfeiting the crop they had put up as collateral for the

loan. If loans are redeemed, the government incurs no cost; if loans are forfeited, the government does incur a cost.

USDA has two tools to balance the domestic sugar market, maintain stable prices, and avoid sugar loan forfeitures:

- the tariff-rate quota (TRQ) limits foreign supplies;
- marketing allotments limit domestic supplies.

TRQ a limited tool. The TRQ rises and falls with U.S. market needs. However, the TRQ cannot be reduced below levels the U.S. has committed to in international trade agreements: no less than 1.256 million short tons of imports from 41 countries under the WTO, and up to 276,000 short tons from Mexico under the NAFTA. The U.S. must import this foreign sugar, a total of up to 1.532 million tons, whether the domestic market needs it or not.

Marketing allotments balance market. USDA sets an overall allotment quantity (OAQ) that is essentially the difference between expected U.S. demand and expected imports – U.S. producers supply the difference. Producers must store, at their own expense, any sugar they produce in excess of the OAQ. (At the end of the 2003/04 marketing year producers are storing about 500,000 tons of excess, or "blocked," sugar and will probably have to store a similar amount of their 2004/05 production.)

Marketing allotments are on unless triggered off. If imports exceed 1.532 million tons (the sum of WTO + NAFTA commitments), marketing allotments are triggered off – USDA loses its authority to impose limits on domestic sales. In other words, the Administration is not permitted to grant increasing amounts of the U.S. sugar market to foreign suppliers and reduce U.S. producers' share of their own market to compensate. Congress essentially was saying the 1.5 million tons the U.S. has already guaranteed foreign producers (about 15% of the U.S. market) is enough.

Danger from CAFTA, other concessions. Mandated imports under the proposed CAFTA and other potential trade agreement countries, in addition to import commitments already made, would trigger off marketing allotments and allow all blocked sugar onto the market – potentially more than 1 million tons worth of accumulated, blocked sugar in 2004/05. USDA would lose control of the market. Oversupplies would drive down the price. Sugar farmers would either exit the business or forfeit their sugar to the government, creating huge government costs.

The CAFTA will probably not be voted on until 2005, possibly as early as February or March. In the meantime, we have to continue to educate the Congress, and the general public, about the danger the CAFTA poses to our industry. Keep up the good work!

CAFTA import amounts trigger off domestic marketing allotments and unleash over 1 million tons of surplus sugar onto an already oversupplied U.S. market

U.S. import obligations	Short tons
WTO(41 countries)	1,256,000
NAFTA (Mexico)	276,000
Total	1,532,000*
CAFTA consequences	
CAFTA+DR (additional first-year imports)	120,000
Blocked domestic stocks released to the market**	1,007,000
Total CAFTA-induced excess sugar	**1,127,000**

* *Domestic marketing allotments triggered off and blocked (surplus) stocks released if imports exceed 1,532,000 short tons.*

** *Domestic production in excess of marketing allotments, 2003/04 and 2004/05 crops (USDA, October 2004 WASDE report.*

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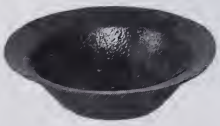

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Congress Plans Lame-Duck Session Following November Elections
USDA WASDE October Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

Members of Congress went into recess until November 15 without finalizing twelve of the thirteen annual spending packages. Instead, a continuing resolution was approved for the twelve delinquent packages, including agricultural spending, that will expire on November 20.

Congressional leaders made plans to bring the Members back on November 15 for a lame-duck session to approve the remaining spending package prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. The Members will likely utilize this post-election session to conference on other major legislation, such as reform of the intelligence apparatus, but we see little possibility that a vote on CAFTA will be held during that session. With so many Louisiana elections likely to be subject to run-off campaigns, and with the potential that control of the Senate could depend on the outcome of the Senate race, it would seem suicidal for the majority to call for a vote at that time.

Congress did manage to complete work on the JOBS bill, which included ethanol-related provisions along with a host of tax measures. The ethanol tax incentive was extended until 2010, a new tax credit was created for biodiesel fuel, and additional language was included to clarify that cooperatives can fully participate in the Small Ethanol Producer Tax Credit.

Finally, the Florida and Hawaiian sugar industries will be receiving disaster assistance as a part of the disaster provisions approved prior to adjournment. As we learned a couple of years ago, the process for actually receiving the disaster payments takes time and actual payment levels may be different from expectations. It is our understanding that Florida will receive approximately $32.8 million in disaster assistance for sugar cane, while Hawaii receives approximately $7.2 million. Congress did not require an offset for this funding.

USDA WASDE October Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its October World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Louisiana's 2003/04 was cut by 51,000 to 1,401,000, dropping supply to 12,210,000 and reducing ending stocks by 64,000. Imports of syrup for sugar extraction were increased by 5,000 short tons.

For 2004/05, total production was increased to 8,569,000 short tons (raw value) from 8,536,000 short tons, with beet production falling slightly and cane production rising by 37,000 tons. Louisiana production was increased to 1,535,000 short tons from 1,526,000 short tons last month, while Florida was unchanged. Imports, exports and deliveries were again unchanged at 1,629,000 short tons, 200,000 short tons, and 9,905,000 respectively, leaving total use at 10,105,000. As a result of the decrease in beginning stocks, ending stocks were decreased to 2,198,000 from 2,229,000, and the stocks to use ratio edged up to 21.8 percent from 22.1 percent in September.

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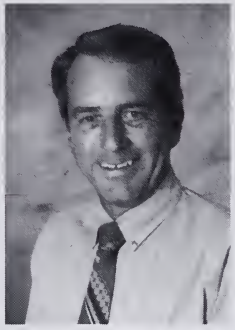

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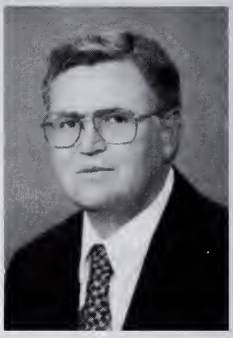

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report
Other Tropical Weather Affecting The Louisiana Sugar Industry
Mexican Rice Borer - Reminder - Mr. Lawrence F. Dugas

At the writing of this article on October 15, 2004, all of the sugar mills in Louisiana have started their 2004 harvest. While a handful of the mills have been processing cane for nearly a month, several mills have elected a later than normal startup date with the last mill (Leighton Sugar Factory) delaying the start of their harvest until October 10, 2004. The two major reasons for the late start are the prediction of a very light crop and significant rain that accompanied tropical storm Matthew. For the first week of October and tropical storm Matthew, rainfall totaled 11 to 12 inches. Luckily, the winds that accompanied Tropical Storm Matthew as it came ashore in the Houma – Thibodaux area were no more than 35-45 mph. The combination of these winds and the excessive amount of rain caused much of the taller plant cane, first stubble and some of the older stubble that was not treated with ripener to go down. The severity of the lodging ranges from just a little shook up, to fields that look as if a steam-roller was let loose in the field. Here on the Teche a few of the thunderstorms were so heavy that the cane was blown over and the seed cane is now exposed. Fortunately, there are not a large numbers of fields in which root lodging occurred. Many of the growers, who because of low tonnage in their older stubble fields started this harvest with soldier harvesters, have now been forced to put them away and bring out their combines.

After the rain, growers are reporting increases of 4 to 5 tons per acre in their yields. However, this comes with a drop of 40 to 50 pounds in sugar per ton of cane. The yields now being reported range from 24 to 30 tons of cane per acre. As the crop harvest continues and much of the lower yielding fields are harvested, many growers are somewhat more optimistic about the yields of their plant cane and first stubble fields in the better land. During all of the rain and accompanying muddy field conditions, many growers found it almost impossible to deliver their daily quotas. Several mills have reported running out of cane during the night shift and slowing to a lower than normal daily grinding rate. Because of the potential of a very short grinding season, growers are urged to make every effort to deliver their allotted daily quotas. Many of the state's mills are anticipating running no longer than mid December. This abbreviated season will put a strain on many growers who are equipped for a 100-day delivery season. Now is the time to discuss any possible delivery problems with your mill's quota person.

In many regions of the cane belt, fields were planted during dry conditions and did not receive any rain for six to seven weeks (or more). Observations of seed cane from some of these fields vary from location to location, but all fields have some amount of red rot. In fields (there are some exceptions) planted with whole stalks that did not receive rain for the prolonged period, there appears to be sufficient viable eyes to make a fair stand of plant cane. However, in fields planted with billets (there are some exceptions) under the same dry weather conditions, the quality of the seed is much less desirable and will require ideal weather

conditions if they are to make an acceptable stand. Unfortunately there are fields that, no matter how ideal the weather conditions are, will not make stands, and must be plowed out. For the cane belt as a whole, there is only a moderate amount of plant cane acreage that will be so badly affected by the dry weather after planting that it will have to be plowed.

Although much of the cane needed rain, too much is too much. Throughout the industry, there are many fields that border on the swamps and marshes. Pumps drain many of these lowland fields, however with the south winds and the enormous rain total that accompanied Tropical Storm Matthew, the drainage pumps were unable to keep up. Because the pumps were unable to keep up, water has covered a portion of the rows in many of these fields. As the rain stopped and the wind switched to the north, growers were able to lower the water level below the tops of the rows in two or three days. With the short time of coverage, little damage is expected to plant cane.

Other Tropical Weather Affecting The Louisiana Sugar Industry

The breeding station at Canal Point, FL, was banged around by hurricane Jeanne. Once again, as with Hurricane Frances, there was some damage to the breeding canes at the USDA breeding station there. During Hurricane Jeanne the facility's greenhouses received more damage to them than was sustained during Hurricane Frances. All in all, as one observes the other neighboring structures in the Canal Point area, the damage could have been much worse. This additional storm damage to the breeding canes and greenhouses should cause no significant hardship to the USDA variety program here in Louisiana. Last month's article reported some of the steps that can be taken to keep up the number of seedlings going into the field at the Houma Station. All of theses steps are still viable even after the second clobbering of Canal Point.

Mexican Rice Borer

After decades of no sugar production, the Lower Rio Grande Valley restarted its sugarcane industry, with the 1972 harvest. By 1980 the Mexican Rice Borer (MRB) was found in commercial fields of cane growing in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. As the industry adjusted to the effects of this new pest, there were reports of yields reduced by 50% in tonnage and 65% reduction in sugar production. Although the MRB was found throughout the valley, the reports of the extremely high yield losses were from fields which were stressed and had a lot of brown dry leaves due the lack of irrigation, or the cane was growing in fields which were high in salt content. With the development of a variety selection program, a shift of cane varieties, movement of cane from salted fields, a buildup of native predators, the introduction of nonnative predators, and the development of a workable pest management program - the MRB has become a manageable pest.

During the 24 years following its discovery in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the MRB has moved north and east at a rate of about 14 to 17 miles per year. Included in the list of known host plants for the MRB are sugarcane, rice, milo, maize, wheat, johnson grass, corn, panicum grass, sorghum, and 5 or 6 others that could be added to the list of hosts. During 1998, sugarcane plantings were established in East Texas near Winnie, in Chambers County, with two other smaller plots established in Liberty and Jefferson Counties. Expecting that the MRB would show up in the East Texas sugarcane fields first, and knowing the potential damage that could come from the new introduction of the MRB – the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) established a trapping protocol to detect moths of the borer. There was some talk of a new sugar mill being built in the area, but until it was developed, the cane would have to be processed in the traditional cane producing area in Louisiana. With the protocol developed between the two state departments of agriculture, the East Texas sugarcane could move freely into Louisiana as long as no MRB were trapped. The protocol outlined the type of pheromone traps to be used, the period for trapping, number of traps per field, and what would happen to the ability to bring the Texas cane into Louisiana when a moth is trapped. In the agreement, if one moth is detected, the sugarcane fields within a one-mile radius of the moth find will be ineligible for shipment to

Louisiana.

A total of twenty-two pheromone-trapping sights have been established in the western cane parishes, along highway 90, and at the mill processing the cane coming from East Texas. LDAF inspectors in Louisiana supervised the collections from the traps here, with input from LSU and the USDA. The traps in Texas are maintained and monitored by personnel from the TDA.

Additionally, there are research plots established in the MRB area of Texas to determine the susceptibility of varieties grown here in Louisiana to infestations of this pest. The project was partially funded by the ASCL's Dedicated Research Funding Committee, with the remainder of the funds coming from the Southern Region IPM Special Grants Program. The project's investigators are Gene Reagan, LSU AgCenter and M.O. Way, Texas A & M. In these Texas tests, as here in Louisiana, HoCP 91-555 and LCP 85-384 received the highest percentage of bored internodes, with HoCP 85-845 and CP 70-321 receiving the least. As was found in the commercial fields in the valley, the severity of damage was highest in the stressed (non-irrigated) plots.

On September 3, 2004, two Mexican Rice Borer moths were collected in a single pheromone trap in Chambers County. These two moths plus a third one removed from the same trap, a short time latter, were positively identified as the MRB. On September 27, 2004, the LDAF called a meeting to discuss if the cane from this area should be allowed into Louisiana or not. Present at the meeting were representatives from LDAF, TDA, LSU AgCenter, USDA-ARS, ASCL, the Texas cane grower from whose cane field the moths were trapped, and the mill at which the cane is processed. At the meeting, the LDAF requested input from all of those at the meeting who wished to do so. At the conclusion of the discussions, it was stated that the LDAF would consider all of the relevant and scientific information that was presented at the meeting.

On October 1, 2004, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) notified the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) that the best way to reduce the risk of the introduction of the MRB is to maintain the current prohibition on entry of cane from the one-mile radius around the MRB adult trap captures, as was originally proposed by the TDA in 1999. Therefore, no cane from within a one-mile radius of a MRB trap capture will be allowed into Louisiana.

Reminder

Remember to be a good neighbor by keeping mud off of the roads. In addition, if the sugar industry is to maintain its privilege of burning cane, the number of complaints must be kept very low; follow as closely as possible the Prescribed Burn Management Smoke Management Guidelines. As we all know, despite doing all things right, things can go wrong, so keep good records for each burn. Good luck with the harvest!

Lawrence F. Dugas Sr.

Mr. Lawrence Dugas passed away at 4:40 p.m. Sunday, October 3, 2004, while in the Southwest Medical Center in Lafayette recovering from heart surgery. Mr. Lawrence was a sugarcane farmer for 59 years. He was a charter member of the Board of Directors for Cajun Co-Op. For many years Mr. Lawrence was an active member of the American Sugar Cane League, serving on its board and taking an active role in many different committees. Additionally, Mr. Lawrence was a secondary increase station operator for about thirty years. Along with Messrs. Bryan Allain and Richard Duncan, Mr. Dugas was very instrumental in the development of the two- row-soldier cane-harvester. His desire to improve the efficiency of the Louisiana sugar industry was also reflected by his continual efforts to improve the reliability and effectives of mechanical planters. He served as King Sucrose LV for the LA Sugar Cane Festival and Fair Association.

On a personal note, Mr. Lawrence was the very first secondary-station operator that I met when I came to work for the League. Throughout the past thirty plus years, he was always willing to share ideas and help out in anyway possible - the kind of person that was always a gentleman, a good neighbor and a good friend. Mr. Lawrence will be sadly missed, but fondly remembered by all of his friends.

Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you must take when burning.

Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas
Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast
Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan
Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day
Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance
Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume
Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results
Step 8. Keep good harvest records

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

Although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Sreet, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

Strategic Plan - Congressional Staff Tour
A.J. "Brother" LeBourgeois

For the past 16 months the Strategic Planning Committee has spent countless hours developing a new strategic plan for the League. A strategic planning effort undertaken by the League was in 1990 and 1998. Our President, John Gay, is to be commended for having the foresight and courage necessary to push our organization through this process. The committee members are Jerry McKey, (chairman) John Gay, Craig Caillier, John Constant, Mike Daigle, Wallace Ellender, Charles Thibaut, David Thibodaux, Daniel Viator, Jackie Theriot, L.S.U. Chancellor Dr. Bill Richardson and myself. When you see them take a moment and thank them for the countless hours they took away from their businesses and families and invested in this process.

The Plan addresses major areas of work that face the League in coming years and it is our hope that this document will be a guide in coordinating, discussions, planning and decision making. We view it as a dynamic document that will change, expand and respond to the needs of the Louisiana sugar industry, while reinforcing our unity and focus on critical issues. We now have a clearly established organizational structure and six key areas to focus our efforts on. These key areas are Business Development Strategies, Legislative Strategies, Leadership Strategies, Communication Strategies, Research Strategies, and Financial Strategies. In addition we have established a timeline that will allow us to monitor the progress that we are making in implementing the plan.

It is the hope of the Strategic Planning Committee that the League will benefit from the resulting clarity, commitment, and forward thinking the Plan offers. From this work the League will be better able to address the opportunities and challenges that face its industry, making the American Sugar Cane League stronger, more flexible, and a viable force for the future.

Congressional Staff Tour

The League held its annual congressional staff tour November 12th – 14th. Staffers from the House Ag Committee, Senate and Congressional Offices, American Sugar Alliance, and our Washington consultants were in attendance. This is the 12th consecutive year that we host this event. The staff tour has become legendary on the Hill. The event provides us with an excellent opportunity to impress upon staffers just how important sugar is to our economy. One staffer writes, " I can't think of a better way to see Louisiana's sugar industry than through the eyes of the people who built it, nurture it and keep it lively... you went out of your way to make us feel like family." They leave the weekend with a real appreciation for the Louisiana sugar industry and more importantly its people.

A. J. "Brother" LeBourgeois

Our industry has lost yet another champion. A. J. "Brother" Lebourgeois passed away October 27, 2004. Sugar was very important to Brother, but it was obvious that what he cherished most were his family and friends. We'll miss you Brother.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Congressional Staff Tour - A New Senator Goes to Washington
CAFTA Vote Possible in the Spring
USDA WASDE November Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

Seventeen congressional staff members visited Louisiana's sugar producing area in mid-November as a part of our annual fact-finding tour. We were also pleased that Phillip Hayes, the new public relations director for the American Sugar Alliance, Don Phillips, trade consultant for the Alliance, and Chuck Levy, counsel to the Mexico Task Force, were able to participate. The congressional staff received extensive briefings on sugar cane research priorities during a November 12 visit to the Houma research facility, and toured the Cameco plant in Thibodaux later that day, where they heard more about the importance of the sugar industry to the regional economy.

On Saturday, November 13, tour members received briefings on domestic policy, the Mexico sweetener dispute and broader trade negotiations before viewing harvest operations at the Laurel Valley Plantation. The program then continued with an informative tour of the Raceland Sugars mill. The congressional staff members play a crucial role in the legislative process in Washington, and this year's participants were appreciative of the opportunity to learn, first-hand, about the problems confronting the industry. CAFTA was one of the issues that growers and processors were concerned about and the tour participants heard a clear message that this and the other bilateral and regional trade agreements are major threats confronting the sugar industry.

A New Senator Goes to Washington

The industry is facing many difficult issues in the coming months, and some of our great congressional supporters have begun new chapters in their lives, so it is good to know that at least one new face in the Senate will be an old friend. Congratulations to US Senator-elect David Vitter on his first-ballot victory in early November! Senator-elect Vitter has been a great friend to the Louisiana industry in his years in the U.S. House and we look forward to welcoming him to the Senate in January. I hope that each of you will take the opportunity in the next few weeks to thank him for his strong opposition to CAFTA and to update him on the other difficulties facing our industry.

We will also be welcoming a new Secretary of Agriculture over the next few weeks, following the mid-November resignation of Secretary Ann Veneman. While there are several names being mentioned as potential replacements, the need to replace many higher-profile Cabinet members who resigned in the post-election period could delay the process for filling the USDA slot. Agricultural trade negotiator Allen Johnson and former House Agriculture Chairman Larry Combest head the rumor mill lists. USTR Robert Zoellick is also expected to resign in the next few weeks.

CAFTA Vote Possible in the Spring

The current Congress returned to Washington in mid-November to complete work on appropriations matters and to increase the debt ceiling in order to keep the government in operation. The lame-duck session is expected to be concluded in a few days and the new Congress will be in session in mid-January.

While there is no official word and plenty of rumors flying around to confuse the issue, it appears that the earliest that Congress would schedule a CAFTA vote would be in the April-May timeframe. While some have speculated that CAFTA could be moved to the House floor as part of a larger trade package, perhaps including Panama and the Andean countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru), this is still very much in the air. Also, the fate of the Dominican Republic FTA remains uncertain as the result of the imposition of a HFCS soda tax in that country after the agreement was negotiated. We will continue to monitor this situation and attempt to provide definitive information at the earliest opportunity.

USDA WASDE November Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its November World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 ending stocks were reduced to 1,907,000, due in part to a 138,000 ton reduction in supply. Higher export sales more than offset lower deliveries. Louisiana's 2003/04 production was cut by 28,000 to 1,373,000 short tons.

For 2004/05, total production was decreased to 8,508,000 short tons (raw value) from 8,569,000 short tons, with cane production falling 191,000 to 3,811,000 short tons, more than offsetting an increase in beet production to 4,697,000. Louisiana production was reduced to 1,467,000 short tons from 1,535,000 short tons last month, while Florida production was reduced by 123,000 short tons due to hurricane damage. Imports, exports and deliveries were again unchanged at 1,629,000 short tons, 200,000 short tons, and 9,905,000 respectively, leaving total use at 10,105,000. Lower beginning stocks and lower production resulted in ending stocks of 1,939,000 short tons versus 2,198,000 last month, with roughly 408,000 tons of blocked stocks. The stocks to use ratio fell to 19.2 percent from 21.8 percent last month.

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Photos from the Congressional Staff Tour

Left: Congressional Staff Tour participants tour the USDA Houma Station

Right: Participants talk with Jerry McKee of Laurel Valley while waiting to ride the Combine Harvester

Left: The participants are beginning to tour the Raceland Mill

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report
Weigh-Boy - Thank You

In the beginning it was good, well maybe not too good. Growers were reporting light yields in their three, four, and five year cane, while the sugar recovery reported by most mills seemed to be on a path that would come very close to setting a new state record for sugar per ton of cane. Then in the first week of October, Tropical Storm Matthew visited the Louisiana cane belt. Twelve to fourteen inches of rain soaked the fields and turned what appeared to be a light tonnage - high sugar crop that was going to be harvested under dry field conditions at lower cost; into a light tonnage – moderate sugar crop that would cost a lot more to get out of the field. Additionally, the winds and rains of Matthew flattened most of the state's crop. Because the crop was short, and most of the cane belt was suffering from a lack of rain; many growers delayed their third and subsequent applications of ripener. These follow-up applications were then even delayed further by the lodging of the crop during Tropical Storm Matthew.

During the canes grand-growth stage, much of the cane belt suffered from the lack of rain (six or more weeks). Following the tropical rains in early October, many of the non-ripener treated fields of younger cane (plant and first stubble) started back to growing. As one grower in Vermillion Parish reported, "Before the tropical storm, the cane leaves in all of my fields were yellow and brown. The cane was not growing, but now after the rains, the fields are very green. However, my TRS has fallen from near 200 pounds to the 160 to 170 pound range and is accompanied by only a slight increase in tonnage." The improvement in the tonnage of the crop and drop in TRS has been reported throughout much of the state.

A growing number of producers are of the opinion that the repeated applications of a harvest aid to ripen the crop are reducing stubble yields, and are not giving large enough increases in sugar per ton of cane to over come losses in tonnage. For these reasons, an increasing number of growers are reducing the percentage of their total acreage on which they apply a ripener. The 2004 crop appears to have not been the year to experiment and reduce the amount of ripener that was applied. Because of the reduction in tonnage, many growers harvested their first rounds of ripener-treated cane in about half the time that was normal; and were forced to move into short-term treated fields or into non-treated fields. These moves were followed with a 30 to 50 pound drop in sugar per ton. Other than three or four nights that were in the mid 40's, the weather has been extremely warm. With the warm/hot days, high soil moisture, lodged cane erecting itself, and an increasing number and size of bull-shoots in the lodged cane; non-treated fields have responded with

(Continued on page 12)

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(Continued from page 9)
growth and are diverting little of the cane's energy into greatly increasing sugar content.

On November 5th the mills were requested to provide an estimation of gross tons of cane that they expected to process. The information provided by the mills was collected from their most up to date grower surveys. This data indicates that the average tons of cane per acre produced for the 2004 crop will be about 28.5 tons. The state's average tons of cane per harvested acre for the years of 1997 through 2003 is about 33.2 tons. This would mean that the yields for this year's crop would be about 14% below recent historical yields. If the updated information that has been relayed by a few mills within the last couple of days is an indication of what is to be expected throughout the industry, then the state's yield could drop an additional ton, for a statewide reduction of over 17%. The last time the yields for the state were that low was in 1994, when the average tonnage was 27.6 tons per acre.

Weigh-Boy

In an effort to reduce the number of over or under loaded trucks sent to the mill, at least three growers in the Bunkie - Cheneyville area have purchased portable scales that can be setup at loading stations. These scales are manufactured by Ferree Trailer and sold under the WEIGH-BOY trade name (Figure 1) and have been in use by the logging industry for a number of years. Because of their compactness and rather lightweight, 3000 lbs., the scales are easily moved from loading sight to loading sight. With little trouble, they can be loaded on the same trailer that is used to move the harvester from location to locations.

Jim and Ross Harper from Cheneyville have used their portable scale for all of last year's crop and the portion of this year's crop that is now harvested, and they are very impressed with its accuracy. As can be seen in the accompanying photos they have a "dog-house" (Figure 2) setup to keep the printer and electronic gear out of the weather. The procedure is to weigh each axle or set of axles and by adding these weights together the total weight of the truck and trailer can be determined. With a transloader setup nearby, cane can be added to the trailer if more weight is needed or cane can be removed if the load is too heavy. The Harpers report that the difference between what they record at the loading sight and what is reported at the mill scale is well within their expectation. They also report that they are able to maximize each trailer sent to the mill, and that on the average they are sending two tons more in each truck. The cost of the scale and all of the electronics that accompany are less than $15,000. Ross Harper is of the opinion that the scale is worth every penny and has improved their bottom-line profitability. He thinks that by reducing over loads and under loads the scale was paid for within the first half of last year's crop. More information about these portable scales and other models of portable scales can be found at www.ferreetrailers.com.

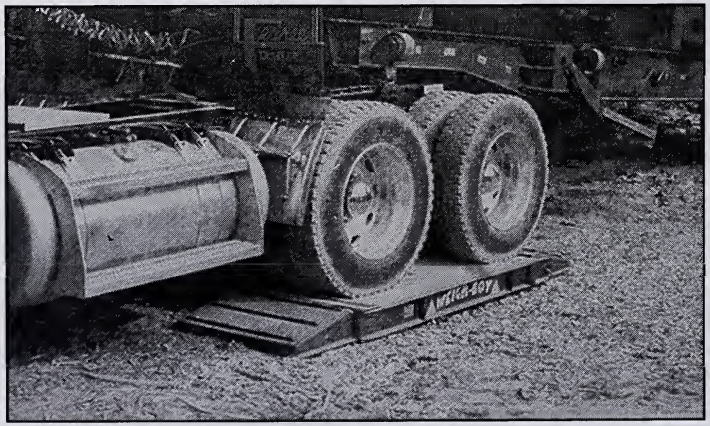

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Thank You

Because of the low yields, it has required many long hours of hard work for the growers this year. Many have been somewhat disheartened by this crop, but most are already looking forward to next year and the crop that it will bring. In the middle of all of the confusion of saving a crop, that is less than adequate and that should require their full attention, all of the growers who cooperate with researchers have been outstanding and in many cases have put the research work ahead of their own needs. On behalf of all researchers who are doing on-farm research, I would like to say thank you to all cooperators for your service to the Louisiana Sugar Industry.

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MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

The Case For Installing Mixed Juice Scales In A Factory

The best way to improve the profitability of a sugar mill is to process as much cane as possible. High volume throughput makes best use of expensive capital assets, and in an industry with high fixed costs, helps to reduce the unit cost of production.

At present time, there are restrictions on production, and so other ways of improving profitability are necessary. This should lead to a more intensive focus on processing costs and on sugar recovery. A comprehensive look at improving recoveries was published in Milling Around in the September 2001 Bulletin. The present article expands on one of the first steps necessary in improving efficiencies through better factory information, i.e. the installation of scales to weigh mixed juice.

Measurement of the quantity and quality of juice passing from the extraction plant to the factory is one of the most important steps in the process of improving efficiency.

The Sugar Balance

Sugar in cane that is not recovered in the raw sugar is lost: (a) in the cane washing process, (b) in bagasse after the extraction plant, (c) in filter cake and (d) in molasses. Additional sugar is lost in process due to chemical and physical losses, and this undetermined loss (e) is calculated by mass balance.

Unfortunately, the calculated undetermined loss is the difference between two large numbers, and slight inaccuracies in measured input and output values cause this number to fluctuate wildly. Unless special steps are taken to obtain really accurate measurements, this calculated loss is meaningless.

Unfortunately, the only throughput data that is accurate in Louisiana mills are the cane and sugar weights. It is therefore not possible to obtain accurate values for the losses in washing, in bagasse, in filter cake or in molasses. We need reliable data for the following reasons:

- to estimate how much sugar is being lost
- to establish where it is being lost
- to measure changes in these losses in response to changes made to improve conditions.

The average undetermined loss in a well-run factory is of the order of 1 to 2% of sugar produced. For a factory producing 100,000 ton sugar/year, this represents a loss of $400,000 to $800,000/year. A reduction of 10% in the undetermined loss would probably recover the capital cost in one year.

Because of the quantities involved, the mixed juice flow needs to be measured very accurately. Mixed juice batch weighing scales have the accuracy necessary to help pinpoint where these losses are occurring.

Details of mixed juice scales

A batch scale system consists of a supply tank above a weigh hopper, which accepts batches of

juice and records the mass before discharging. The weigh hopper is tared before accepting a new batch. Older systems incorporated mechanical/ hydraulic mechanisms for weighing and controlling juice flows. Typical of this type are the Maxwell-Boulogne and Servo-Balans scales, which were the standard for many years. They incorporated test weights in the installation, so that the weighing system can be checked routinely and accurately.

Subsequently load cell systems have replaced them. The weigh hopper is supported on three or four load cells to record the mass. The electronic systems are far more reliable and accurate than the mechanical scales and require less maintenance and attention. Quick acting tight shut-off butterfly valves have been adopted, which has speeded up the operation of the scales. The weigh hopper may have a capacity between 2 tons and 7 tons and the supply tank is generally about the same size.

The scales will generally read to about 0.05%, but the accuracy in operation is within 0.1%. This is quite suitable for factory control purposes. Routine checks with the test weights should be done, preferably once per week. The scale tanks should also be thoroughly cleaned on a routine basis.

Care must be taken to ensure that the supply tank does not overflow and by-pass the weigh hopper into the receiving tank. The overflow should be routed back to the tank from which it was supplied and if necessary a high level alarm should trip the supply pumps. The butterfly valves should be visible, so that they can be readily checked for leaks. The structure supporting the weigh hopper should be rigid enough to ensure accurate mass determinations and preferably be free from vibration.

Other metering systems

Magnetic flow meters are sometimes used in an effort to measure juice flow. However they cannot be expected to give an accurate enough measurement. The installed accuracy is generally not better than 1%, and since it measures volume and not mass flow, it is affected by juice density and by entrained air. Even incorporating an on-line density meter into the system does not lead to acceptable accuracy.

The only flow meter which has the required characteristics is a coriolis meter. It can measure flows with an installed accuracy of 0.15% and measures mass not volume flow. This type of meter can handle solids in the liquid, is insensitive to variations in temperature and pressure, has a high turndown and is virtually maintenance free. However they come only in smaller sizes, with the largest having an 80 mm pipe connection and more than one meter would be required for flows above about 150 t/h. Some larger size meters are becoming available but at a cost. The 80 mm meters are expensive, of the order of $10,000, but installation is cheap and easy and no lengths of straight piping are required before or after the meter. It is expected that prices will reduce in future as further improvements are made to these meters.

Juice sampling and analysis

It is important to ensure that the sample of juice taken is a representative sample and that the analysis is accurate.

It is common practice to collect a composite raw juice sample over the period of an hour. If batch scales are in use, a representative sample can be obtained by taking a small sample from each tip of the scale. Details are given in the SASTA laboratory manual. Taking a small amount from the discharge of each scale tip ensures that a representative sample is obtained, proportional to the juice flow.

Sampling raw juice can easily give unreliable results if certain basic precautions are not taken. The most serious problem is the potential for the sample to deteriorate, as conditions of temperature and concentration are ideal for fermentation. This requires that all the sampling tubes and containers be regularly cleaned, preferably by steaming, and that some preservative is added into the sample container before collecting the sample. The second problem is the potential for evaporation. Thus the sample container should have a secure lid and the sample should be kept cool.

The analysis of juice samples is done on filtered liquid and the presence of solid suspended matter in the juice stream needs to be taken into account. Since the suspended matter can constitute between 0.1% and 1% on

juice, its effect can be very significant. The mass of suspended solids has to be subtracted from the total mass recorded. In this instance a catch sample once per hour is adequate.

Conclusions

The installation of mixed juice scales is the single most effective step that can be taken to improve the factory control process. It enables a better estimate to be made of extraction, factory recovery and undetermined loss. If this is followed subsequently by the installation of a bagasse belt weigher and a more accurate measure of molasses production, then recoveries and losses can be established with confidence. Raceland is taking these steps this season, and we look forward to the results.

The bulk of this improvement in the reliability and accuracy of process data can be obtained only through the installation of mixed juice scales, an easy and relatively inexpensive job. It represents a fundamental and effective step in improving factory efficiency.

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Louisiana
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Step 6.	**Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume**
Step 7.	**Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results**
Step 8.	**Keep good harvest records**

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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The Sugar Bulletin

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Charles J. Melancon/Editor
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
499 South Capitol Street, S.W.
Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone: (202) 554-1222

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: LASugar@AmSCL.org

Washington Consultant
The Macon Edwards Company
600 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 320
Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone: (202) 969-8110

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

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A Time to Come and a Time to Go!

I guess you're thinking, what on earth is this portion of Charlie's article going to cover with a title like that? Well. Senator John Breaux.

In his retirement announcement of Monday, December 15, 2003, our senior U.S. Senator stated that there is a time to come and a time to go, and the time to go is when you are at the top of your game. While the top of his game is what all Louisianans like about the seniority system in Congress and the natural ability of the good Senator to negotiate and operate across party lines and ideologies, it is difficult for the average person to understand why such a good player would want to retire. And why now?

As much as I hate to see him go, which has to do with his dedication to this industry and this state, I fully understand his desire to have some years of his life to spend more time with his family. There is not much privacy, especially when you are one of only 100 such people, as he is, in this entire country. You live in a glass house and always need to be cautious of any statement that you make for fear that it will be misinterpreted or misrepresented. To go out to eat with friends or family in a local restaurant, and to engage in casual conversation with your party without interruption from good people who just want to say hello, becomes a difficult task. The friends and family are usually more upset by the interruption than is the Senator, although John couldn't have had a better partner throughout his career than his wife and friend Lois.

To Senator John Breaux: It has been a great pleasure to have known and worked with you during your tenure in the House and Senate while you served this great country, state and industry of ours. This state has been very fortunate to have such Senators as Allen Ellender, Russell Long, J. Bennett Johnston, and now John Breaux.

We will all miss you. And while I have wished you would stay for one more term, I respect you most for having the courage to make the difficult decision to move on. Many people may never understand the difficulty you and Lois faced in making such a decision. But the emotion of the decision did show that faithful Monday in Baton Rouge. On behalf of this industry, I thank you for your loyal service throughout the years. I also wish you good luck in whatever endeavor or profession you may pursue. But until you leave, your constituents expect to see you at the office on time!

Additionally, I must also note that you could not have been as good a public servant as you have been without the dedication of the terrific staff people you have had working with you throughout the years. To all of you . . . Many thanks!

Melancon for Congress

By the time you read this article, I may be on an administrative leave of absence from the President & General Manager's position at the League, putting together an organization to make a run for the seat presently held by Congressman Billy Tauzin of the 3rd Congressional District. I would have written a farewell to Billy also, but you see Billy, you haven't said yet whether you are truly leaving. If it is okay with Billy and the League Board, I would like to do such an article, when and if he does depart, or at least when and if he makes such an announcement.

The decision to seek election has not come easily for Peachy and I, mainly because of my concern for the industry that I have grown up in and now serve. However, with the encouragement and support of many friends in and out of the sugar industry, I feel I can take your fight, and that of other affected people and businesses in the Third Congressional District and this state to the Congress of the United States. That by no means infers that Billy and the rest of the Louisiana delegation aren't doing a good job. Quite the contrary, it is my hope that I can be part of this great delegation of Louisianans and continue the effort to make this district, state and nation better for all of us.

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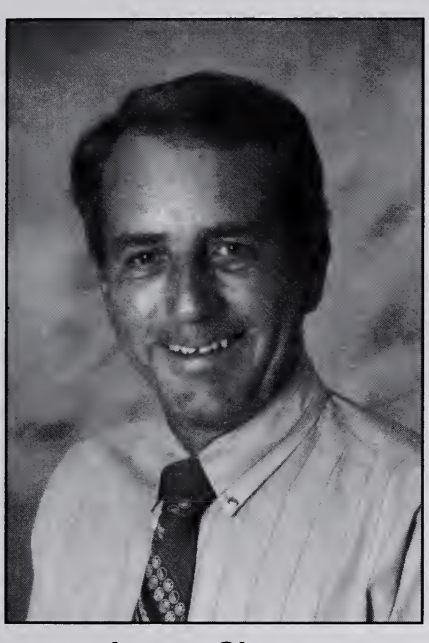

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Breaux Announces Retirement Plans
Agricultural Appropriations - CAFTA Talks In DC
Energy Bill Stalled Until January
USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

In mid-December, Senator John Breaux announced that he would not seek re-election in 2004, marking the end of 32 years of outstanding congressional service to the citizens of the state, including 14 years in the House and 18 years in the U.S. Senate. Senator Breaux has been a true champion for the sugarcane farmers and industry throughout his tenure in Washington. An undisputed leader of the Senate Sweetener Caucus, Senator Breaux has fought against efforts to kill our industry, whether in farm bill or appropriations battles, as well as efforts to circumvent US tariff laws. Most recently, Senator Breaux has been instrumental in educating the White House on the potential consequences of destroying the livelihoods of Louisianans involved in the production and processing of sugarcane.

Senator Breaux will remain an active (and, no doubt, highly effective) Senator throughout 2004. I will have more to say about this outstanding legislator and friend during the next year but I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest respect and admiration for this champion. I hope you all have an opportunity in the coming year to let Senator Breaux know how much you appreciate what he has done for Louisiana sugar over the past 32 years.

Agricultural Appropriations

Congress went into recess for the holidays without completing work on the omnibus budget package containing the agricultural appropriations. The House approved the budget package after the Senate went into recess and further action by that body is expected in January. The package contains an increase of $270,000 for Houma research activities above FY2003 funding levels and also provides $1.35 million in new funds for buildings and facilities design and construction.

CAFTA Talks In DC

The trade negotiations with Central American nations (Central American Free Trade Agreement) were renewed in Washington, DC in mid-December amid uncertainty over the inclusion of sugar in these negotiations. The government of Costa Rica pulled out of the negotiations in the eleventh hour and the final agreement covered only the remaining four CAFTA countries (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador), but the agreement will serve as a template for agreements with Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, not to mention the other bilateral and regional trade pacts the Administration plans to deliver to Congress in the coming months.

At the time of this writing, the details of the CAFTA agreement were just beginning to emerge. The best news is that the over-quota (2nd Tier) import tariff was left untouched by negotiators. On the other hand, the quotas for the individual countries were increased by a cumulative figure less than 90,000 tons in the first year, with a roughly 2 percent growth factor (on the CAFTA quota addition only, not the WTO commitments) leading to additional imports of slightly less than 130,000 tons in the 15th year (or 255,000 tons when current WTO committments are added). A two percent growth rate will be applied annually after that, effectively increasing the quota by less than 2,200 tons per year.

The agreement includes a stocks management option whereby the U.S. government could decide that the U.S. market does not need additional imports and could choose to compensate to the CAFTA countries for unused access, with ongoing negotiations about how this provision would work, i.e. whether it would be a cash payment, exchange of sugar from CCC stocks, or by providing them other commodities held in stocks.

The agreement also includes the net-surplus producer provision contained in the Chile FTA, increased access only comes into play when and to the extent that the country involved is a net-exporter. This provision has little bearing with the CAFTA countries but was included in this pact with an eye toward linking this agreement to ongoing talks with the Dominican Republic.

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Energy Bill Stalled Until January

A full-court press to complete work on the energy bill was stalled in the Senate over the issue of including liability protection for MTBE producers but Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-LA) is expected to renew and redouble his efforts to push this bill through both Houses of Congress in January 2004.

USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its December World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was unchanged at 8,378,000 (raw value), with beet production remaining at 4,415,000 and cane production at 3,963,000 short tons. Louisiana production for 2002/03 was unchanged at 1,389,000. 2002/03 total imports were unchanged at 1,713,000 short tons and imports under TRQ were likewise unchanged at 1,200,000 short tons. Total supply was unchanged at 11,517,000, 2002/03 exports were likewise unchanged at 142,000 short tons, leaving ending stocks at 1,305,000 and 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use at 12.8 percent, all unchanged from November.

2003/04 production was increased to 8,969,000 from 8,895,000 short tons in November, with beet production rising to 4,798,000 from 4,720,000 and cane production dropping slightly to 4,171,000 from 4,175,000 short tons last month. Louisiana cane sugar production was reduced slightly to 1,566,000 from 1,578,000 short tons in November. The beet production increase, combined with no changes in imports at 1,584,000, resulted in an increase in 2003/04 total supply to 11,858,000 from 11,784,000 short tons in November. Exports and sales for domestic uses were unchanged at 160,000 short tons and 9,675,000, respectively, resulting in no changes to total uses at 9,835,000 short tons. Ending stocks were increased to 2,023,000 from 1,949,000 short tons, resulting in an increase in the stocks-to-use ratio to 20.6 percent from 19.8 percent last month.

By Windell Jackson

Thank You - Crop Report
American Society of Sugarcane Technologists

Nearly all of the researchers' work at the LSU AgCenter Sugarcane Research Station at St. Gabriel and the Ardoyne Farm (USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Farm) has been completed for 2003. The collection of reliable data for many of the various research projects would not be available if it were not for the cooperation of Cameco. Because the leaders at Cameco know the importance of variety research and all other research to the production of sugarcane here in Louisiana, each year they provide, rent free, the use of a combine harvester to each of the two research stations. These harvesters are invaluable during each stage of the variety program. With the use of a combine harvester, those who are doing variety research are able to obtain reliable information on the potential yielding ability of new varieties.

The delivery of clean high quality cane to the mill at a low cost is one of the major objectives of the Louisiana sugar industry and researchers working for the industry. In an effort to improve the quality of cane going to the mill, Cameco makes available to researchers for evaluation, harvesters that have been modified and that appear to deliver better quality cane. By doing so, research data can be obtained to support or not support the perceived advantage of the improvement.

On behalf of the researchers in the variety program at the two stations and the other sugarcane researchers that depend on the information coming from the generosity of Cameco, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Crop Report

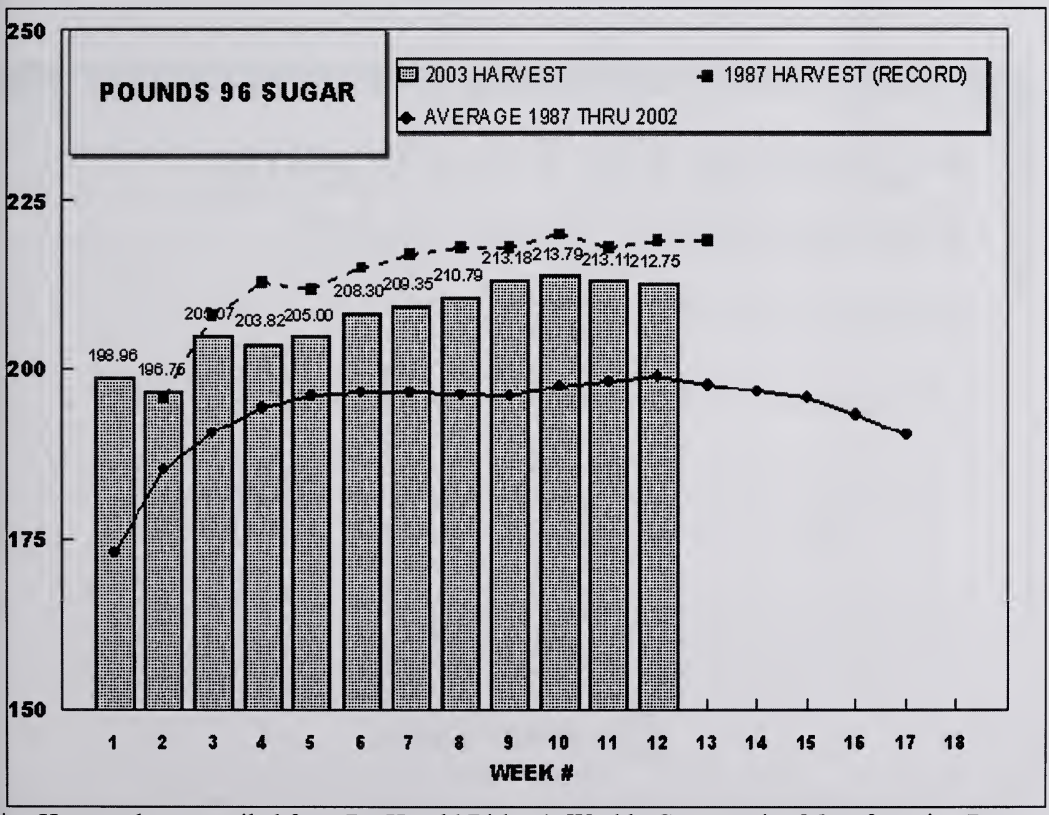
As growers have gotten into the harvest of plant cane and first stubble fields, they have reported an increase in tonnage. However, in most cases the yields are lower-than-expected by some three to four tons per acre. At the writing of this article on December 15, the end of this year's harvest is growing very near. Here on the Teche two mills have already completed their 2003 harvests. Iberia Co-op was the first mill to complete this year's harvest. The co-op completed its harvest on December 8. LASUCA completed harvest before the end of the same week, and were receiving no cane on Saturday December 13. In a recent survey of mills, eight of the fifteen mills indicated that they would complete their harvest season before December 20. Only three mills indicated that they would not conclude harvest before Christmas. All of the mills reported on the estimation of the crop from their last grower-survey. These estimations of the remaining crop did not indicate an adequate cane supply that would require processing into January. As of yet, there have been no freezes severe enough to split the cane stalks. However, there have been several frosts with minimum temperatures at daybreak of 28 to 29 degrees. Depending on the region of the cane belt the severity of frosts or freezes can be seen easily. In the southern regions of the cane belt, a few viable terminal buds can still be found in standing cane. In areas where cane was protected by trees or growing near a body of water, it is still very green. Due to the

shortness of the harvest season there should be no losses from freeze damage to cane.

The lack of rainfall for the first two-thirds of this harvest has allowed growers to burn much of their cane residue during the harvest season. However, the wet field conditions of the last two or three weeks have prevented the burning of fields by many growers. Research data indicates that if the residue is not removed from the row top by mid January, there can be significant yield losses. This data also indicates that the burning of cane fields to remove residue in mid February and early March can reduce yields. Only a few fields are badly rutted after this year's harvest. Growers are reminded that LCP 85-384 does not tolerate waterlogged soils. Growers are also reminded that any rutted fields should be drained as quickly as possible and fields should not go through the winter months with standing water.

Several fronts have passed through the cane belt during the last two or three weeks. And with their passage, most of the state's sugarcane acreage received excessive rainfall. Most areas reported four to five inches of rain, while there were a few scattered reports of ten inches of rain. These rains were accompanied by 35 to 45 mile per hour winds. Until these excessive rain and winds, the crop was standing straight and sucrose was continuing to go up. With the passage of these fronts, most fields of standing cane were knocked down and field conditions became very muddy. The worsening field conditions were soon reflected by the lower quality of cane going to the mill. This was mirrored in reports from growers indicating lower core values, while the mills were reporting lower recovery rates.

History indicates that there is a normal drop in sucrose each year during the month of December. If the average recovery from mills is looked at for the years of 1987 through 2002 (Graph #1) there is a clear indication that sugar production continues to increase until about the first week of December. This data indicates that sugar recoveries then decrease from the first week in December until harvest is completed. There are two main reasons for the decline in sugar at this



* = Harvest data compiled from Dr. Harold Birkett's Weekly Comparative Manufacturing Report

time, one of which is that December is normally a very wet month. With these December rains and poor drying conditions harvest becomes very difficult and high quality cane (cane low in trash and mud) is hard to deliver. Not only do field conditions deteriorate, this is normally about the time harvest of Polado treated fields is completed.

As one looks at the loads of cane being delivered to the mill, it is obvious that field conditions have deteriorated significantly. After the rain because of the saturated field conditions, combine harvesters are not able to do a good job removing the wet leaf shucks and other materials. Also, because the cane is lodged, there are now a greater number of bull shoots. Where the frosts have not killed the growing points, top portions of the cane stalks are trying to erect themselves. Both of these factors detract from sugar production by the cane stalk.

Because of the wet muddy conditions, mills have resumed washing of cane. As has been reported on numerous occasions the washing of cane decreases yield by four to six lbs. of sugar per ton of cane. Again, this is a factor in the decreased recovery of sugar. The combination of all these factors are the reasons why sugar per ton of cane and recovery have decreased.

American Society of Sugarcane Technologists

Growers and processors are reminded of the upcoming dates for the ASSCT annual meeting. Once again, the Louisiana Division of ASSCT will hold its annual meeting at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, in Baton Rouge, LA. The dates for the meetings are Tuesday and Wednesday, February 3-4, 2004. The technical session for the manufacturing section will be held Tuesday afternoon, with the technical Agriculture session being held Wednesday morning. For additional information, contact Dr. Denver Loupe at 225-578-6530 or visit the ASSCT website at www.assct.org.

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

New Leadership Shaping Up - Budget Woes

Governor-Elect Kathleen Blanco is cautiously setting up a legislative leadership structure with which she feels comfortable as she begins to push for her vision of 21st century Louisiana. The Louisiana legislature, probably more than any other state legislature, traditionally seeks a partnership relationship with the new Governor by enlisting significant input from him/her in electing its leaders. Senator Don Hines, a doctor from Bunkie with a record of support for agricultural issues, has Blanco's blessing for the job of President of the Senate. Representative Joe Salter, a career educator from Florien, has been offered with Blanco's approval for Speaker of the House. Both races seem to be settled as this article is prepared for press.

Senator Hines was the most controversial of the two but the decision seems to have been settled without bloodshed. Rep. Charlie De Witt stepped aside to allow Salter to step into the Speaker's post with less commotion. Both Hines and Salter must wait until an organizational meeting of the legislature after Blanco's inauguration before it all becomes official.

Representative Jerry Luke LeBlanc has been persuaded to resign from the legislature to accept the post of Commissioner of Administration for the Blanco team. The Commissioner of Administration is the business manager of the state. LeBlanc is one of the most popular people to serve in the legislature in recent times and is broadly heralded as one of the smartest and straight-shooting people available to her and is thought to be a very bright jewel in her crown. LeBlanc has chaired the budget committee for years and knows more about the balance sheet and what makes it balance than anyone. This was a very popular choice!

A great deal of bargaining is ongoing over who gets to chair which committee and as with her first choices Gov.-elect Blanco is being deliberate and cautious and she seems to be letting her legislative leaders pick their own committee structure, again keeping an eye on the Blanco agenda for change for Louisiana.

Budget Woes

It seems that they never change the tune on the budget. Here we go again with another $300 million budget deficit. Outgoing U.S. Senator John Breaux has put an extra $100 million in the federal health care budget for Louisiana and the Revenue Estimating Conference predicts an increase from state tax revenues of $60 to 70 million but the way the budget goblins work we are still faced with a $300 million gap between income and expense.

The problem comes from programmed salary increases, rent increases, etc. and that assumes that $170 million in "temporarily permanent" (or permanently temporary) sales taxes are renewed in a special session this spring. There always seems to be lots of talk that THIS YEAR they won't renew the taxes but they always do when push comes to shove.

Another budget worry is that Blanco promised to phase out unpopular business taxes, which everyone agrees, make it difficult to recruit new business to the state. Louisiana is one of the few states that taxes business debt as capital and levies a sales tax on machinery and equipment. It is likely that the Legislature will not start the phase-out immediately and will dodge that bullet for a couple of years.

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[1] Preharvest interval of 140 days in sugarcane established under Special Local Need 24(c) Label for the state of Louisiana.

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October 2001 to September 2003

UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE
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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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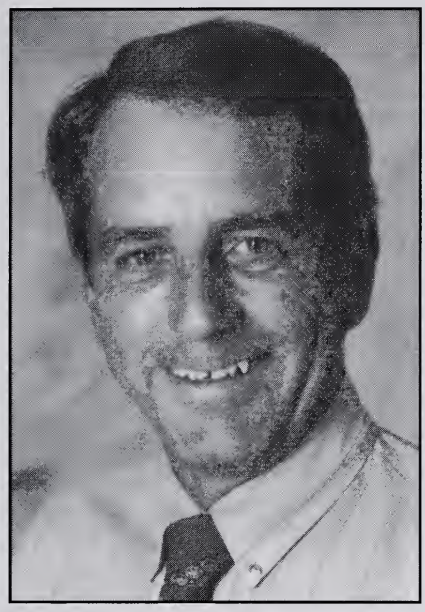

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

Sweet News for the New Year

As we move into the New Year we have good news to report. The sugar imitators are fighting amongst themselves. Equal, "The Blue Stuff," took aim at its chief competitor Splenda, "The Yellow Stuff," alledging that the advertising for the rival sweetener is false. The suit charges McNeil Nutritionals with making deceptive claims about its sugar substitute, Splenda. According to the Law suit, "there is no sugar in Splenda, and Splenda's sweet taste does not come from sugar."

McNeil has designed a carefully orchestrated campaign to mislead consumers and confuse the public into believing that Splenda is natural and contains sugar—both of which are absolutely false, the suit says.

Our Sugar Association, of which the American Sugar Cane League is a member, also filed suit against McNeil Nutritionals (Splenda) sighting many of the same allegations.

Additionally, an attorney in California filed a consumer-based class action case against McNeil alledging violations of various consumer protection statutes and business unfair trade practice statutes.

Editor's Note: The following is a guest contribution authored by Peter Ohara of Czarnikow Sugar. This editor thanks Mr. Ohara for agreeing to allow his timely and relevant article to be published in The Sugar Bulletin.

Sugar Price Outlook
By Peter Ohara
Czarnikow Sugar

U.S. MARKET

The good news is that No. 14 prices have worked higher over the last two weeks but unfortunately it is on the back of production problems in both Florida and Louisiana. A few days prior to the most recent WASDE report (released on December 10), which resulted in a projected 274,000 ton decrease in the 2004/2005 U.S. sugar supply, No. 14 prices in March 2005 through November 2005 were near or roughly 15 points shy of their previous contract lows. Prices have since advanced and the market finally appears to be back in balance. Future prices will probably determine (if there is a deficit reallocation announced from Louisiana and Hawaii) when they will be reallocated to Florida and Texas. This could effectively remove all blocked stocks in Florida. However, it may not be until March/April. By statute, sugarcane and sugarbeet processors will report to CCC by April 15 current inventories, estimated production, expected marketings and any other factor to determine a

processor's ability to market its allocation. CCC is required to determine by May 1 whether sugarbeet or sugarcane processors will be able to market their respective allocations and if there is a need for reassignments. However, CCC has taken this action a couple of months earlier in the past in order to get a better handle on the actual sugar crop supply.

With the reduction in stocks, as reflected by the No.14 market, for the first time in a couple of years, we are seeing buyer's concern over the supply side of the market.

World Market Outlook

Sugar prices have risen by around 3 cents per pound since the beginning of the year. At the start of January, the world price for raw sugar was 5.70 cents per pound, while raw sugar is currently trading at around 8.70 cents per pound.

The structure of the sugar market has changed markedly since the mid-1990s. At that time, world sugar production was spread between a number of countries. Since that time, Brazil has emerged as the world's largest producer and exporter of sugar and it is the only producer which is profitable at current market levels. Brazilian production continues to increase and the country has achieved new crushing records this season. In addition to sugar production, sugar cane in Brazil is also diverted towards the production of ethanol for fuel for a growing domestic fleet of ethanol-powered cars. Although Brazil's cane crop is continuing to expand, political and economic factors are currently making ethanol production more attractive for millers.

Another factor behind the increase in sugar prices has been a fall in production in India, the world's second-largest sugar producer. India has always been a key factor in the world sugar market and has often been behind large swings in the outlook for the world market. Poor weather conditions along with the financial problems faced by many of the country's sugar mills have led to a sharp reduction in sugar production. As a result, India is expected to switch from being a sugar exporter to a sugar importer over the coming season.

Production is also forecast to fall in a number of other important countries, in particular Cuba, Pakistan and Thailand. Cuba was once the world's leading sugar producer, but the industry was badly hit by the collapse of the Soviet Union which ended the preferential trade agreement for sugar between the two countries. Since then, inefficiency and deteriorating machinery has meant that production has been on a long-term decline. In Thailand, cane development has been affected by dry weather conditions and as a result, production is expected to fall in the coming season.

On the demand side, rapid economic growth in developing countries has been fuelling higher sugar consumption and this is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. The largest growth in sugar demand is being seen in Asia, led by India and China. The growth in sugar demand in China is particularly exciting as it is being driven by urbanisation and lifestyle changes rather than by population growth and income. As a result, Chinese demand has the potential to grow significantly, albeit from a relatively low per capita base. Sugar consumption is also increasing rapidly in many other areas in particular Africa and the Middle East region. The construction of new refineries during the past decade in Nigeria, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dubai and, more recently, Algeria have all encouraged demand growth.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Thanks to Senator Breaux
Trade and Budget Top 2005 Agenda
USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

I want to take an opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to U.S. Senator John Breaux for his outstanding years of service to the citizens of Louisiana. It has been my great pleasure to work with Senator Breaux throughout his years of service in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. In that time, Senator Breaux has always been ready, willing and able when the sugarcane farmers and processors have sought his assistance on any issue involving sugar.

Senator Breaux has served as a chairman of the Senate Sweetener Caucus for more than a decade. He has been a Senator to whom other Senators turn for leadership and guidance on key votes affecting the sugar sector. He has defended the sugar program from attacks in farm bills and appropriations measures and has shown time and time again that he is a true champion of the U.S. sugar industry. The Senate will miss his savvy counsel nearly as much as we will.

In expressing my appreciation to Senator Breaux, I would be remiss if I did not also thank Johnny Broussard for his selfless service. Johnny has been with Senator Breaux throughout his House and Senate careers and has, himself, become a leading voice of wisdom to other congressional staffers within the Louisiana delegation and throughout the Senate. Johnny and Senator Breaux deserve much credit for their passionate and persuasive defense of Louisiana's sugar producers.

Trade and Budget Top 2005 Agenda

The coming year shapes up to be critical to the well-being of our industry and to production agriculture as a whole. The U.S. government has negotiated a trade pact including the Dominican Republic and Central America (CAFTA) and is nearing completion of a pact with Panama that seems likely to include additional sugar access for that country. Other ongoing negotiations could reach fruition during the calendar year that could involve increased access to the U.S. sugar market for South African nations (Botswanna, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland), the Andean nations (Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia), Thailand and several Middle Eastern nations.

Obviously, the focus over the past fifteen months has been on CAFTA, the first of these trade agreements that will likely be sent to Congress in early 2005. We will continue to work with the Louisiana delegation and other Members of Congress to highlight the reasons why CAFTA is a bad deal for America and a potentially devastating blow to our efficient domestic producers. We will also closely scrutinize the other trade agreements that might be considered to ensure that they live up to Vice President Cheney's stated preference to reserve sugar for the multilateral negotiating tables at the WTO.

The WTO will also play a key role in the coming year, particularly with regard to the US

cotton case and the EU sugar regime case, both of which are now in the appeal stage. The EU sugar case would seem to be more directly related to our industry, but the resolution of this case seems less likely to impact our domestic industry in the short term, while the cotton case could cause a more immediate ripple effect on all U.S. farm programs.

The cotton case has put many other commodity programs at risk because of the dispute panel's ruling that the direct payment program, approved by Congress for most major commodities in 2002, does not meet the criteria to be categorized as "Green Box support," i.e., domestic support having little or no distorting impact. I'll have more to say about this issue in the coming months but, for now, the important thing to realize is that the WTO case could shift some $5.1 billion in US domestic support into another (Blue Box) category and that this shift would expose the commodity programs to more drastic cuts in the future in order to fit within new Blue Box support parameters being negotiated at the WTO.

Meanwhile, all signs point to 2005 as the first in a series of years where mandatory and discretionary spending cuts will be considered under budget reconciliation talks in Congress. The Congressional Budget Office's 2001 projection of a 10-year federal surplus of $5.6 trillion has given way to a September 2004 projection of a 10-year federal deficit of over $1 trillion. Expected additions to the deficit this year for Defense/Homeland Security, making permanent the tax cuts approved over the past four years, repairing the Alternative Minimum Tax provision of tax law and additional debt servicing would add $407 billion to the debt in 2005 alone and would result in a cumulative 10-year federal deficit of $4.7 trillion. This does not include any additional deficit spending for Social Security reform or other policy priorities that may arise.

Assuming that budget reconciliation is required in this and future years, and that agriculture is required to make reductions on a percentage basis similar to previous budget reconciliation efforts, agriculture could face 10-year cuts in the range of $251 billion, or 57% of the 10-year total of $442 billion in authorized spending under the 2002 farm bill. Clearly, that level of cuts will jeopardize many of the commodity programs that involve direct payments to producers.

All of the above will almost certainly affect the process of developing a new farm bill (the current bill expires in 2007). The agriculture committees will begin holding hearings in 2005 that will likely lead up to farm bill consideration in 2006 or 2007. However, severe cuts via budget reconciliation may force the committees to make painful choices before the current farm bill expires.

While the sugar program continues to operate at no-net cost to the government, and sugar producers receive no direct subsidies from the government, we will keep a vigilant eye on the budget reconciliation program and work with other producers to ensure that the U.S. maintains a strong and adequate safety net for America's farmers.

USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its December World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 ending stocks were reduced to 1,897,000 short tons (raw value) from 1,907,000. Louisiana's 2003/04 production was increased slightly to 1,377,000 short tons from 1,373,000 short tons.

For 2004/05, total production was decreased by 274,000 tons to 8,234,000 short tons (raw value) due to a drop in cane production. Louisiana production was reduced to 1,391,000 short tons from 1,467,000 short tons last month. Imports were increased by 10,000 tons under the high-tier/other category, but total supply was projected to fall to 11,770,000 from 12,044,000 last month because of the reduction in production and beginning stocks. Ending stocks are reduced to 1,665,000 from 1,939,000 short tons last month and the stocks to use ratio fell to 16.4 percent from 19.2 percent last month.

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report - Rust - Ruts
New Varieties HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128
ASSCT

With the unseasonably warm weather of October, November, and the first half of December, cane that was used for seed and cane that was planted in August and September have grown very vigorously. Because of the very dry planting conditions, many growers were concerned about their plant cane stands; however, because of the extremely good growing conditions of the past two and one-half months, the planted cane has had a chance to tiller and now most stands are very good. As a whole, there are only a very few fields in which the stands remain unacceptable and which must be plowed out. Some growers recognized weak stands early and have replanted some of these acres.

At the writing of this article on December 15, 2004, five of the state's sugar mills have completed their 2004 harvest. All but three of the remaining mills are predicting completion dates on or before December 20th. If the crop estimations reported in early December are correct, the state's tonnage will be about 17% below average. With a few days of drier field conditions, growers are reporting a return of higher TRS numbers from the core lab. Although sugar recoveries for most of the state will not be as good as last year's, it will still be above average. With the end of the crop so near, last night's belt-wide freezing temperatures will do no damage to the cane remaining to be harvested.

Rust

Because of the advanced growth of plant cane and the cane used for seed, there are many fields of LCP 85-384 that have rust from front to back. If much of the rust infected green leaves survive through the winter, there is a good chance that the rust in 384 will be as bad in 2005 as it was in this year's crop. A number of observers of this year's crop are of the opinion that the severe rust infection in LCP 85-384 contributed greatly to the state's low tonnage this year. At this time, Dr. Jeff Hoy is in the process of evaluating the data that he collected on this year's rust tests. The information collected by Dr. Hoy is the first time that the potential of rust's effects on LCP 85-384 have been measured. Dr. Hoy will be reporting this information at upcoming grower meetings.

Ruts

With the nearly every other day rains during harvest, many of this year's plant cane and first stubble fields were very badly rutted during their harvest. Because harvest was such a struggle, many growers were preoccupied with saving the crop and forced to neglect getting the water out

of their fields. It was nearly impossible to drain fields following the 2002 harvest, which was a contributing factor to the low yields of 2003 and 2004. Although HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128 were released to the industry in 2003 and 2004 respectively, it will take several years before either will occupy any amount of the state's acreage. At this time LCP 85-384 is on 90% of the acres in the state, and as has been said on many different occasions, LCP 85-384 does not tolerate wet-feet. **Every effort should be made to drain fields and get as much water out as possible**

New Varieties HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128

Because of its slow emergence this spring and after planting, many growers are questioning HoCP 96-540's ability to compete with Johnson grass and Bermuda grass. With the warm weather most of the 2004 plantings of the new variety appear to be very sound and many growers are very much impressed with their first increase plantings of the new variety. There are a few fields of HoCP 96-540 that have very poor stands. In many of these fields, the cane was planted with billeted seed.

In this year's outfield test plots of plant cane, first stubble, and second stubble HoCP 96-540 continues to outyield LCP 85-384 in sugar per acre and tonnage. Although the plots were somewhat down, HoCP 96-540 does appear to be less lodged and does harvest better than LCP 85-384. L 97-128 has remained very straight in the test plots and has harvested exceptionally well. The yields of L 97-128 for sugar per acre, sugar per ton, and tonnage are higher than 384's yields. Most growers were very impressed with the quality of the cane that came from the secondary stations this year when L 97-128 was distributed. Because of its erectness and height, growers were able to get a very good first start of this new variety. Shoots of L 97-128 started to appear very quickly after planting, and filled out the top of the row at a rate that is very impressive. If L 97-128 has a problem in the spring, it is that it comes out of the ground very quickly and gets very tall early in the spring, well before LCP 85-384.

ASSCT

Growers and processors are reminded of the upcoming dates of the ASSCT meeting in Baton Rouge. The Louisiana Division of ASSCT will hold its annual meeting at the Holiday Inn Select (formally the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center). The dates for the meeting are Thursday and Friday, February 10 - 11, 2005. The sessions will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday. In addition to the usual business activities (reports and election of officers) there will be a technical session on one or more important and timely topics. The technical session for the manufacturing section will be held Thursday afternoon with the technical agricultural session being held Friday morning. For additional information, contact Denver Loupe at 225-578-6930 or visit the ASSCT website at www.assct.org .

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

League Looks at Weight Limits
Property Taxes Hike
State Budget Process Begins

This year's crop disaster has ASCL officials trying to find some relief for beleaguered farmers and millers. Lowering transportation costs of getting the cane to the mill is one place to look. General Manager Jim Simon and others have been trying to see if weight limits can be eased a bit. What they heard back from seasoned legislative sources is that, at 100,000 pounds, sugar growers already have allowance for the heaviest loads on the road for any commodity on the state highways and the highest in the nation for the Inter State System.

Weights and Standards officials said that if the League had not authored the legislation passed recently to mandate the extra axle by 2008 that there was growing interest in repealing the law allowing a permit for 100,000 lbs. There is also a legitimate concern about trying to pass laws on the weight limit subject; that any raised profile on the subject will probably draw the envy of other agricultural and industrial haulers who would try to amend themselves into our legislation. This could create a backlash and kill the bill, or worse, change the mood in the legislature and cause us to lose what we have. Nobody wants to revert to 83,000 pounds.

Property Taxes Hike

Property owners across the state are being staggered by the property tax statements they are getting from their assessors; the statements in some cases reflect a three or four hundred per cent increase. Legislators are trying to find ways to tone down these huge increases by promising to file bills to cap the increase to a reasonable amount per year.

Why, all of a sudden, do we have this problem. After all, we have a homestead exemption and most of us are used to a modest tax. Well, you can thank retiring Legislative Auditor Dan Kyle and a set of dusty old laws which require every assessor to assess every homestead every four years. Kyle, recently referred to as the Grinch Who Stole Christmas, pointed out that local governments were being cheated by the assessors who failed to discharge their duty as required by statute.

Sunshine on the topic produced concern on the part of local assessors for malfeasance in office and it produced, for the first time in recent history for most, an accurate tax bill. Kyle did an investigative audit in 2003 which found that many assessors were ignoring the law that

requires all property to be reassessed every four years. Some homesteads had not been reevaluated in 10 or 15 years. This neglect was popular with most homeowners, but it had its downside. The victims of this over sight were new home buyers whose assessments were based on the current price of a house resulting in property taxes a great deal higher than their neighbors. Their complaints were heard by Kyle and the audit was conducted.

The League will follow legislation on this topic and report its intent and success to you in the Bulletin.

State Budget Process Begins

Once again we hear the old song about how the state budget is three or four or five hundred million dollars in the red. Rent escalation clauses for rented office space around the state; step increases in pay for a couple of hundred thousand government employees; higher cost for building roads and other traditional cost factors the state has no way to avoid are the traditional culprits. This coming legislative session sounds like all the others except in one respect.

The TAX word is barely being whispered. Conventional wisdom says the just completed elections seem to have removed any doubt that taxes are a bad idea. More and more political pundits are predicting that politicians will run, not walk, away from tax increase proposals if they fear for the loss of their political life.

There is one big "but" to that conventional wisdom, however. Term limits, a law mandated maximum for length of service in the same political office, kicks in for the first time in Louisiana at the end of these terms - three years from now. Over half of the legislature will have to quit or seek another office. At this point it is difficult to determine how many of them will simply retire from politics and how many will try for other offices. If some of them are going to quit running for office there may be enough of them to join with the fairly large group, who have always sought tax increases to solve budget deficits. Stay tuned.

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Louisiana
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Step 1.	**Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas**
Step 2.	**Obtain Fire Weather Forecast**
Step 3.	**Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan**
Step 4.	**Determine Smoke Category Day**
Step 5.	**Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance**
Step 6.	**Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume**
Step 7.	**Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results**
Step 8.	**Keep good harvest records**

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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1997 Cameco 2500 Combine - $55,000. Call John Gay at (225) 687-3683 or (225) 776-2241.

1981 JD 4440 High Crop Tractor - $7,500; **J & L V-Ditcher** - $750; **(2) IH 480 Flat Choppers** - $2,000/chopper; **(4) Small Single Axle Planter aids** - $1,200; **IH 3-row Subsoiler** - $1,000; **1996 LMS Drain King** - $2,000; **1995 Cameco CHT 2500 Combine** - cut 10,000 tons on tracks, elevator and feed roller bearing jobs - $57,500; Call Rene Simon at (337) 658-0221 (cell), (337) 367-0258 (home) or e-mail - Simon@cox-internet.com.

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Volume 83, No. 5 **February 2005**

THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

Announcing the

ghty-Second Annual Meeting

of the

merican Sugar Cane League

of the U.S.A., Inc.

Wednesday, February 23, 2005 - 1:30 p.m.
Howard Johnson
Envie Banquet Facility
203 E. Bayou Rd., Thibodaux, LA

Registration begins at 1:00 p.m.
At this meeting there will be an election of members of the Board of Directors to serve during the ensuing year.

(See Up Front With the League for more information)
ıe League Foundation will also hold a meeting to elect a Board of Directors.

nembers of the League will please consider this an official notice to attend.

he mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc

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John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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Classifieds ..... **back inside cover**

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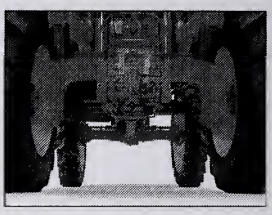

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

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Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League
Report of the Nominating Committee

The Eighty-second Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League will be held Wednesday, February 23, 2005 at the Envie Banquet Facility of the Howard Johnson Hotel in Thibodaux, Louisiana. Registration will begin at 1:00 p.m. and the meeting will be called to order by President John Gay at 1:30 p.m.

The first order of business will be the report of the Nominating Committee which will present its nominees for Directors for the ensuing year. Following this important report and potential election, there will be reports from the Finance Committee, Legislative Committee and Research Committee. Any other business to come before the general membership will be considered before adjourning.

The High Yields Awards Program will be held immediately following the Annual Meeting.

The Board of Directors and Staff of the League urge your attendance and solicit your input at the annual meeting.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The following individuals were nominated at the annual committee meeting to serve on the American Sugar Cane League Board of Directors beginning on February 23, 2005.

Grower Member Nominees

David Allain
Jessie Breaux
Grady Bubenzer
Willie Danos
Wallace Ellender
John Gay
Jake Giardina
Ronald Gonsoulin
Dean Gravois
Charles Guidry
Warren Harang, III
Jim Harper
Tim Hebert
Robert "Bobby" Judice
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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Passing of the Guard in LA 3rd
Ag Budget Targeted For Freeze
US Ag Sector Awaits WTO Cotton Decision
USDA WASDE January Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

Congressman Billy Tauzin retired at the end of 2004 after twenty-four years of service to the people of Louisiana's third congressional district. Congressman Tauzin was a true champion who was willing to tackle even the most difficult issues in support of Louisiana's sugarcane producers and processors. Billy's door was always open and his staff was always ready to take up the challenges that we brought to him. For his years of courageous support, the industry owes him a debt of gratitude.

But now a new chapter begins and a new champion has stepped forth to serve the third district. The Honorable Charlie Melancon is certainly not a new face, nor is he an unknown quantity. Congressman Melancon brings years of experience on the issues that matter to our industry and we look forward to working with him in his new role. We are also pleased that he has started the process of building his legislative team by naming Jacob Roche as his legislative director. Jacob, who handled agricultural issues for former Congressman Chris John, has an outstanding background in the issues that matter to Louisiana. Having worked closely with both of these gentlemen over the past few years, we are confident that the Louisiana sugar industry will be well served in Congress.

Ag Budget Targeted For Freeze

The Bush Administration and various congressional budget staff have indicated that discretionary spending in non-defense, non-homeland security areas will be subject to a spending freeze in an effort to rein in Federal spending. Means testing has been mentioned as one way to achieve the spending cuts in agriculture and other areas of the budget. Specific to agriculture, we can expect another attempt to impose tighter payment limitations on recipients of farm program benefits. The Administration will unveil its budget recommendations in early February and House and Senate Budget Committees will then prepare budget blueprints to guide congressional action on spending programs for the 2006 fiscal year beginning October 1.

As per my comments last month, congressional sources indicate that a budget reconciliation measure may be necessary to impose draconian limits on spending. While sugar is a no net-cost program, meaning that changes to the program would not result in spending reductions, we should expect opponents of the program to use the budget reconciliation and the annual appropriations processes to renew their attack on sugar. Further, there may be efforts to raise revenues by reinstituting loan assessments, the tax on sugar producers that was removed in the 2002 farm bill.

US Ag Sector Awaits WTO Cotton Decision

Nearly every segment of the US agricultural sector will be anxiously awaiting the results of

the Brazilian challenge to the US cotton program at the WTO. The dispute panel is to rule in early March on a case that essentially encompasses nearly all elements of the traditional farm programs. The "decoupled" direct payments to farmers are put at risk because of the limitations in the 2002 farm bill on planting fruits and vegetables on the affected acreage. As I mentioned last month, these payments could be moved from the Green Box (non-trade distorting subsidies) to the Amber Box (some trade distortion), a shift that would imperil these programs along with the dairy and sugar programs.

Countercyclical payments and loan gains, both marketing loans gains and loan deficiency payments, are also under challenge, along with the cotton Step 2 program and export credit guarantees provided by the Commodity Credit Corporation. If the dispute panel rules in favor of Brazil regarding the loan and countercyclical payments, the US will have 15 months to eliminate or alter these programs to comply with the ruling.

USDA WASDE January Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its January World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2003/04 ending stocks were unchanged at 1,897,000 short tons (raw value) and Louisiana's 2003/04 production was likewise unchanged at 1,377,000 short tons.

For 2004/05, total production was dropped to 8,143,000 from 8,234,000 short tons (raw value), as lower cane production more than offset an increase in the beet production projection to 4,705,000 tons from 4,697,000 short tons. Louisiana's production was slashed to 1,290,000 from 1,391,000 short tons last month. Total supply then was reduced to 11,679,000 tons from 11,770,000 short tons last month. No changes were made to imports, exports, deliveries or use. As a result, ending stocks were reduced to 1,574,000 from 1,665,000 short tons last month. Stocks to use fell to 15.6 percent from 16.5 percent last month.

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[1] Preharvest interval of 140 days in sugarcane established under Special Local Need 24(c) Label for the state of Louisiana.

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By Windell Jackson

Atrazine Update
Residue Blanket Management

In the past there have been years in which the level of atrazine detected in the water at an Iberville water-plant were high. These spikes in the levels of atrazine were well above what is considered to be allowable levels for human consumption. These short-term spikes have occurred during the months of late February, March, and early April. This is the time at which many cane and corn growers apply maximum rates of atrazine. In most cases, the high spikes in atrazine levels occurred when heavy rains followed the applications of the herbicide.

These high levels of atrazine in the water could not be ignored; requiring health and environmental officials to take steps to reduce the amount of atrazine found in the watershed. One of the first considerations by the EPA was to cancel the label for atrazine, thereby ending the use of this herbicide by both sugarcane and corn producers in the upper Terrebonne Basin. However through much negotiation by the producers of atrazine (Syngenta), EPA, and LDAF - a compromise agreement was reached. The agreement or MOA contained stipulations for more monitoring of water and field runoff, educational programs, and the implementation of **voluntary BMPs** by both cane and corn growers who produce crops in the area. Also included in the negotiations was the use of a rolling average and threshold levels. The average of samples collected during a rolling 90-day period would be used as the standard. If the new threshold is exceeded for this 90 day rolling average; then there is no other option but the removal of the label for the use of atrazine in the upper Terrebonne watershed.

The atrazine stakeholders group (Upper Terrebonne Basin) continued to hold meetings during 2004. The group is made up of representatives from Syngenta, LADF, DHH, Terrebonne Water District, the AgCenter, the Extension Service, USDA, crop consultants, the American Sugar Cane League, and other interested parties. During the committee meetings, the results of the samples and tests conducted during the previous period were discussed. Better methods by which information and recommendations for the use of atrazine can be presented to the growers in the region are always the goal of the committee members. Herbicide recommendations for both cane and corn have been revised to include changes in the recommended use of atrazine. The recommendations call for growers voluntary utilization of alternative products, the application of atrazine at lower rates where possible, and the use of aerial application of atrazine only when there is no other alternative. A much more complete review of this information will be presented during upcoming grower meetings in 2005.

Atrazine is a valuable chemical that is widely used by the cane growers of Louisiana. The use of atrazine gives good-targeted weed control

at a relatively low-cost. The loss of its use in sugarcane will add to the cost of production, reduce profits, and reduce the ability to control some weed problems. If the suggested BMPs for the use of atrazine are followed, growers in the upper Terrebonne watershed should have the use of this herbicide for a number of years.

Residue Blanket Management

After the poor crop of 2004, this industry needs to achieve the maximum production from each acre of cane harvested. In the following article, Drs. Viator, Johnson, and Richard discuss information on the potential of increasing yields by the timely removal of harvest residue.

MANAGEMENT OF THE POST-HARVEST RESIDUE BLANKET

Ryan P. Viator, Richard M. Johnson, and Edward P. Richard, Jr., USDA-ARS-SRRC Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA 70360

Timely and effective management of the post-harvest residue blanket generated during the chopper harvesting of green cane is essential if maximum sugar yields are to be achieved. The Sugarcane Research Unit in Houma, LA has been actively conducting research over the past several years to determine the most efficient and effective residue management practices and was first to document the potential yield reductions that occur on the subsequent stubble crop if the post-harvest residues are not removed. The amount of yield loss has been observed to vary from 3-5 T/A and from 500-1500 pounds of sugar per acre. The yield reduction is typically most severe on older stubble cane on heavy soils, particularly when these crops are harvested in September and early October of the following year. The causes of this decrease in yield are probably related to the effects that the residue has on soil temperature and soil moisture content. Experiments continue to demonstrate that although the post harvest residue layer serves as an insulator in the winter by increasing soil temperatures by 3-4 degrees it also decreases soil temperature in the spring by 4-5 degrees. This decrease in temperature combined with a concurrent increase in soil moisture by 7-8% can result in a significant delay in germination of the ratoon crop in the spring. This delay in germination is critical in Louisiana, which already has the shortest growing season of any sugarcane producing area.

A series of residue management studies were initiated in 2003 and harvested in 2004 in an effort to determine the most effective and efficient residue management practices. Six studies were conducted to determine the effects of residue removal timing and method. Tests were conducted on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd stubble fields of LCP 85-384 grown on both heavy and light soil. Removal treatments consisted of no removal, brush, and burn; timings consisted of monthly removals from harvest until March. Data from a majority of the sites indicated that producers should either burn or mechanically remove in January or early February because delaying removal until March produced yields lower than where the residue was not removed at all. Two of the six sites indicated that mechanical removal might be inferior to burning when attempted in January or February. Moreover, a study conducted on a poorly drained, heavy-clay soil investigating different types of mechanical removal equipment also indicated that burning produced greater sugar yields than all mechanical removal options and that incorporation of the residue using a Lawson Canemaster also did not increase yields.

Several experiments were also initiated in 2003 to determine how residue management practices are influenced by ripeners. In these experiments we applied six ounces of Polado on 1st stubble LCP 85-384 and then harvested these plots at 40, 50, or 60 days after application. After harvest, we then split these plots in half, removing the residue on one half and retaining the residue on the remaining half. The subsequent 2nd stubble crop was harvested in 2004. **Results from this experiment indicated that Polado treatment of the 1st stubble crop did not affect yields of the second stubble crop. However, sugar yields were lower where the residue was not removed.**

In summary, the potential for trash blankets to reduce yields following green cane harvesting exists. Greatest yield reductions are associated with the older ratoon or stubble crops: crops that are generally harvested early the following year and those crops grown on heavy soils. Removal of residues, by either burning or mechanical means should be completed by the end of January or early February. Mechanical removal is as effective as burning when done early, preferably immediately after the crop is harvested in the fall. Where fields are to be destroyed, producers should consider retaining the residue. Studies done by ARS and other researchers have shown that residues can decrease soil erosion and thus could be an effective management tool in fields that are to be fallowed.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

A "TMDL" For Mercury?

The Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) program established under the Federal Clean Water Act has been discussed frequently in this column, most recently in the April 2004 edition of *The Sugar Bulletin*. Under the TMDL system, watersheds (river basins) that are in violation of a water quality standard such as that for mercury, must have prepared for that basin a comprehensive plan to reduce mercury discharges from both point and non-point mercury pollution sources on the watershed to a degree that is sufficient to achieve standards compliance within the basin. That compliance achievement plan must include an allotment to all point and non-point sources of pollution located in the offending watershed of a maximum allowable pollution load (TMDL) that these pollution sources may discharge on a daily basis in order to achieve and maintain water quality standards. The TMDL program has been controversial from the outset because the methodology is unproven, doomed to failure in many situations by natural interferences, developmental costs enormous and largely unfunded, implementation costs to both the public and private sector not adequately considered, and unreasonable demands by environmentalists for immediate implementation where many years of very costly research are needed to clearly identify problems and whether and how water quality standards may actually be achieved.

Metallic mercury (quicksilver) is a silvery colored very heavy liquid. Excessive acute and/or chronic exposure to the metal, its vapor and mercury compounds can have severe toxic effects including tremor and emotional instability. The "Mad Hatter" of old alludes to the affect of chronic exposure of felt hat makers to mercury that was used in the curing of felt. The current environmentalist "mania" about mercury began in 1960 with the discovery that a large scale outbreak of neurological disorder in Minimata, Japan was due to the ingestion of local seafood contaminated by mercuric compounds discharged by local industries into Minimata Bay. That latter incident caused a major crack-down in the U.S. on deliberate mercury discharges and restrictions on mercury use in order to minimize inadvertent discharge. Much or most of the mercury discharged to Louisiana waterways was attributable to the use of mercury cells at chlorine-caustic manufacturing plants, and these mercury cells should all have been replaced by diaphragm cells many years ago. If not already replaced, our environmental protection agencies have been in a deep sleep. The burning of coal in power plants is alleged to release mercury vapor to the atmosphere, and the USEPA says that new regulations to be released in March 2005 will require coal fired power plants to reduce mercury emissions by 70 percent. However, mercury releases from coal-fired power plants have no significant affect on Louisiana waterways.

The most significant thing to remember is that mercury occurs naturally in soils throughout the world. The U.S. Geological Survey Paper 1270

indicates that the mercury content of soils at the earth's surface near the Gulf of Mexico from the Florida peninsula to eastern Texas, especially in coastal Louisiana, is two or more standard deviations higher than the geometric mean concentration of surficial soils throughout the contiguous 48 states. It is only natural that Louisiana waterways have some mercury in stream waters and stream bottom deposits, and in the fish life that exists in or visits these waterbodies. However there are no violations of the water quality standard for mercury reported in any coastal Louisiana watershed and no indication of dangerous mercury bottom deposits or contaminated fish populations within these watersheds.

Upon returning from the New Year holiday, Louisiana sugar mills found a notice from LDEQ in their mailboxes, that USEPA had drafted "TMDLs" for "Waterbodies draining into Louisiana's coastal bays and gulf waters," and that sugar mills could expect new special conditions to be placed on their NPDES permits requiring mercury measurements and reporting, and control systems to restrict discharges. This, of course, comes as a complete surprise because there is no water quality standards violation on which to base TMDL! Imposition of TMDLs where there is no violation of a water quality standard has no legal basis and serves no beneficial purpose but does waste a lot of public and private effort and resources.

The EPA document on "Mercury TMDLs" indicates the justification for imposing TMDL is that Louisiana health and environmental agencies have issued advisories not to eat king mackerel fish (from the Gulf of Mexico) because of high mercury content. The document gives no indication of how long such a situation existed or the mercury content in King Mackerel fish taken from waters off the Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas coasts. No direct or logical link between mercury in King Mackerels and drainage from Louisiana coastal watersheds is indicated. In fact, the mercury-fish tissue data in the EPA report indicates clearly that Louisiana coastal watersheds are not the cause of the problem.

The King Mackerel is a pelagic (ocean dwelling) species that does not frequent Louisiana's less saline embayments. The reported fish samples were taken along Louisiana's coast from the Mississippi to the Calcasieu, and a number of other pelagic species were collected concurrently including Cobias, one of which was found to be higher in mercury content than any of the King Mackerel samples. At three of the eight total sampling stations, those located near Barataria, Vermillion, and Calcasieu bays, fish that frequent these less saline waters such as Red Drum, Spotted Seatrout and Croaker were also collected. In every case where these adaptive fish species were sampled, they were found to be much lower in mercury content than the King Mackerel caught at the same locations. Drainage from coastal Louisiana watersheds appears not to be the cause of the mercury problem; rather, it appears that these basins should benefit the King Mackerel by providing a better (lower mercury content) food supply than available to the King Mackerel elsewhere in the Gulf of Mexico.

The document's fish sampling data does, however, suggest a more likely cause of the fish-mercury situation. The King Mackerel sample with the very highest mercury content was collected near the mouth of the Mississippi River. It is well known that the highest mercury content in sea-water is associated with turbidity (i.e., river silt). The annual "dead zone" reported in the Gulf associated with high Mississippi River inflow provides ample opportunity for mercury methylation in the very area where King Mackerel reside. EPA should have done something about the "dead zone" problem years ago instead of inventing phony issues such as the "Mercury TMDL" to appease their environmentalist constituencies. Anyway, the law says TMDLs apply to water quality standards violation. There is no "standard" for mercury in fish flesh, only health "guidelines" to assist consumers in making rational health decisions. The "Mercury TMDL" though perhaps well intentioned, appears to be nothing more than an environmental hoax.

If prompt administrative relief is not given from this and other such absurd "TMDL" initiatives, Congress needs to help EPA by amending the Clean Water Act to forbid such absurdities.

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

The Sugar Bulletin

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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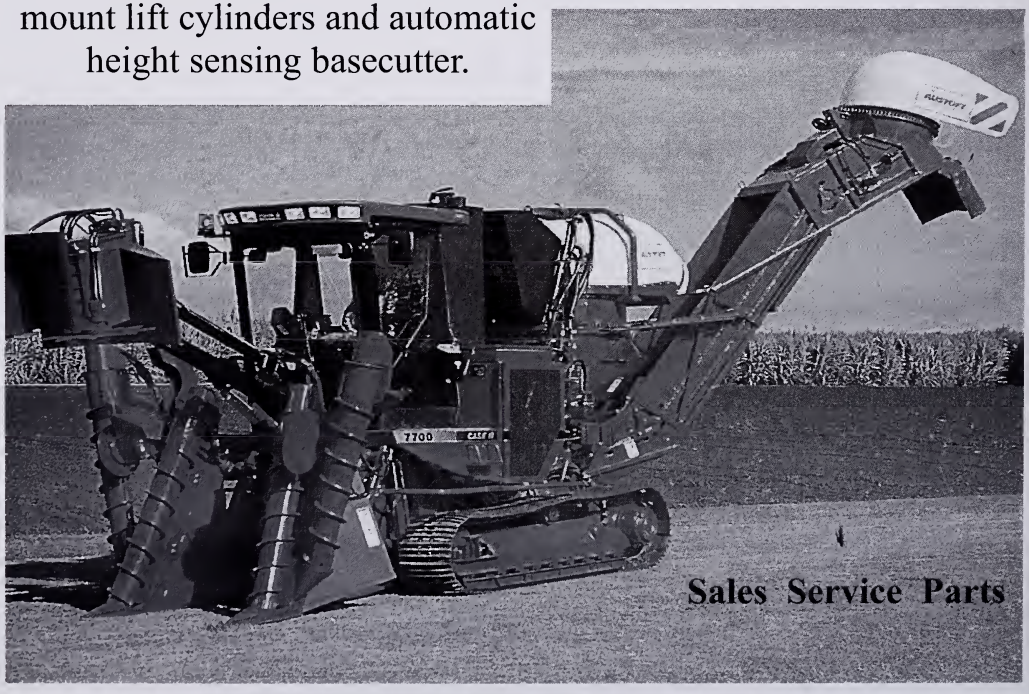

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

Committee Assignments and Strategic Plan
Rio Grande Valley Sugar Cane Growers
Farm Bill Discussions - Budget

On February 1, a new fiscal year for the League commenced. With the new fiscal year comes a new slate of officers and directors to serve our organization. It also presents the opportunity to rejuvenate our committee system and work toward the implementation of our strategic plan. Our members are encouraged to come forth and let the League leadership know if you have an interest in serving on a particular committee. For us to reach our full potential as an organization we need to draw upon the tremendous base of knowledge and experience that exist in Louisiana's sugar industry.

Rio Grande Valley Sugar Cane Growers

A few weeks ago myself, Windell Jackson and Herman Waguespack visited the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. Their new President and General Manager Steve Bearden hosted us. Steve, like his predecessor Mr. Jack Nelson, all of the farmers, agronomist and researchers are always very cooperative and work well with us to the mutual benefit of our respective industries.

It is always interesting and informative to visit with sugar growers and millers from other areas to get a different perspective on how they plan to sustain themselves in this most demanding industry. I continue to be impressed with their mill owned harvesting program. I know that it would be impractical to install this exact arrangement in Louisiana, but some of the efficiencies that this system creates is worth taking a hard look at. Their industry at times has struggled and faces severe hardships much like ours. Additionally, the resolve, perseverance and will to succeed is another characteristic that we have in common. We congratulate Steve Bearden on his new position and look forward to working with him and the Rio Grande Sugar Growers.

Farm Bill Discussions

Our current farm bill runs through September of 2007. Various sugar industry leaders have met on a couple of occasions to begin preliminary discussions regarding the next Farm Bill. The last meeting took place on Tuesday, February 1 in Florida. Craig Caillier and Jessie Breaux attended the meeting as representatives of the Louisiana Sugar industry. These meetings are preliminary and are intended only to begin the farm bill discussion process. As an organization we will begin our own discussions as to what the producers and processors in Louisiana want to see in the next Farm Bill.

As I talk to farmers and mill operators the most often asked question is, "What is the League's position going to be with regards to whom controls a farmers allocation?" This is an issue unique to the Louisiana industry. Our National Legislative committee will oversee the

resolution of this issue for us. As a stakeholder in the Louisiana sugar industry you are encouraged to voice your thoughts, comments, ideas and concerns regarding this issue. Farm bill negotiations will become more intense as the year moves on. Please know that the League will be receptive and responsive to all of its members as we move toward a farm bill that works in the best interest of the entire Louisiana sugar industry.

Budget

As Louisiana's cane crop goes so does the revenue for the American Sugar Cane League. Our income for this coming year will be down substantially. The staff and the Finance Committee have worked diligently to come up with a budget that reduces expenses and focus our financial resources on activities that create real benefits for our members, and the least amount of hardships for League funded programs.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Ag Spending Targeted In Bush Budget
Committee Assignments For Delegation
CAFTA Proponents Gearing Up For Vote
USDA WASDE February Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The President's FY06 budget proposal includes several recommendations to make major changes to farm programs in order to cut nearly $7 billion in agricultural spending over ten years. The Administration has recommended implementation of a marketing assessment of 1.2% on sugar loans, a tax on producers of approximately $4.32 per short ton, raw value. You will recall that a similar assessment was repealed in the 2002 farm bill, signed by President Bush.

The budget proposal calls for elimination of the three-entity rule, which allows participants in basic commodity programs to receive program benefits as individuals and as part-owner in two other operations, and reduces the overall limit on payments from $360,000 to $250,000. Crop program payments (direct payments, counter-cyclical payments and marketing loan benefits) would be reduced by 5%. Eligibility for nonrecourse loans would also be limited based on historical production; though it is difficult to determine how this provision might be administered in this era of nearly 100% flexibility (i.e. producers may plant nearly any commodity, or none, without regard to historical base acreage). Production above those limits would be eligible only for recourse loans (i.e. no forfeiture of commodity allowed).

The proposal would slash premium subsidies for crop insurance and would require program crop producers to purchase the catastrophic coverage (50/100) level in order to receive any program benefits. In addition, the proposal makes cuts to conservation, rural development and trade promotion programs.

The budget proposal also recommends significant cuts in discretionary program funding. Appropriators, who fund discretionary accounts, are almost certain to raid mandatory program accounts (such as farm programs) to pay for discretionary programs within their jurisdiction.

Now that the President has announced his budget proposal, the House and Senate Budget Committees will develop their own budget resolutions in March and will conference by mid-April in hopes of reaching agreement on a single budget plan, i.e. the concurrent budget resolution. This has been a difficult task in recent years and Congress has operated without a budget resolution in two of the past three years.

Should the budget committees agree on a concurrent resolution, authorizing committees (such as the agriculture committees) will develop legislation to reconcile mandatory spending programs with the budget resolution. This process will occur in the House and Senate on parallel, but independent, paths. For example, the House Committee on Agriculture will report a reconciliation package back to the House Budget Committee, which will then move a comprehensive (or "omnibus") reconciliation package to the House floor, while the same process is playing out in the Senate.

Once each legislative body has completed action on a reconciliation package, a conference will be held to address the differences in the two packages. This negotiated reconciliation package must then be approved by the House and Senate.

Appropriators will, likewise, reconcile the annual appropriations packages to meet any

discretionary program reductions required by the budget resolution. This process typically begins in earnest in mid-May and continues through the summer. The House appropriators will work toward the objective of completing action by mid-June, while the Senate will seek to complete action on all appropriations bills by the end of July. If these targets are met, Congress will return in September to complete work on the appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year, September 30.

Committee Assignments For Delegation

Louisiana's congressional delegation will have key roles to play in the 109th Congress. The dean of the delegation, Rep. Richard Baker (R-6th), is among the senior members of the Financial Services Committee and appears to be in line for the chairmanship of that committee in two years. Rep. Jim McCrery (R-4th) is likewise positioned to lead the Ways and Means Committee in a couple of years when the chairman of that committee is term-limited. Rep. William Jefferson, (D-2nd) continues to rise in seniority on the Democratic side of the Ways and Means Committee and is also a member of the Budget Committee, a difficult job that will play a crucial role in the development of budget reconciliation legislation this year. Rep. Rodney Alexander (R-5th) moves over to the Appropriations Committee, where he will play a key role in continuing the vital research programs at the Houma station.

The newest members of the delegation will have to hit the ground running. Representatives Charles Boustany (R-7th) and Charlie Melancon (D-3rd) will serve on the Committee on Agriculture. The potential for program cuts under budget reconciliation could be the first job these new Members will have to face. In addition to agriculture, Rep. Boustany will serve on the Transportation and Education/Workforce Committees. Rep. Melancon will serve on the Resources Committee, where he will be able to work on the coastal erosion issues crucial to the district, and will also serve on the Science Committee. Rep. Bobby Jindal (R-1st), in addition to serving as President of the GOP Freshmen class, will be active on three committees: Education/Workforce, Resources and Homeland Security.

On the Senate side, Senator Mary Landrieu (D) continues to be an effective voice for Louisiana's interests while serving on the Appropriations Committee, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Small Business Committee. Freshman Senator David Vitter (R) joins Landrieu on the Small Business Committee and will also serve on the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Commerce Committee.

CAFTA Proponents Gearing Up For Vote

The supporters of CAFTA and their friends on Capitol Hill have begun to gear up for the coming House vote on the trade pact. The press blitz in recent weeks makes it clear that this will be a difficult battle, regardless of the outcome. The assumption is that the White House will begin to move draft legislation to the Hill in the coming weeks in order to push a vote in late April or May.

In recent weeks, we have participated in numerous meetings with our allies, both private sector and congressional, in preparation for a ramp-up in activity on the trade front. We continue to reach out to undecided Members of Congress and have had much success in building the alliances required to turn back the Administration's efforts to decimate our industry.

USDA WASDE February Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its February World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2004/05 total production was dropped to 8,117,000 from 8,143,000 short tons (raw value) due to a slight lowering of beet production and a decrease in Hawaiian cane production. Louisiana's production was unchanged at 1,290,000 short tons. Imports were unchanged, as were beginning stocks, but lower production numbers drove total supply down to 11,653,000 tons from 11,679,000 tons last month. Likewise, no changes were made to exports, deliveries or use. As a result, ending stocks were reduced to 1,548,000 from 1,574,000 short tons last month. Stocks to use fell slightly to 15.3 percent from 15.6 percent last month.

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[1] Preharvest interval of 140 days in sugarcane established under Special Local Need 24(c) Label for the state of Louisiana.

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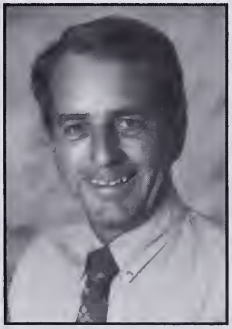

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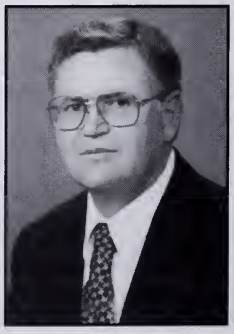

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

F.C. Schaffer and Audubon Sugar Institute Fallow-period Management Options

Much of the research conducted for the Louisiana sugar industry is a cooperative effort of the researchers, processors, growers, and commercial organizations. For many projects, there is additional assistance from the American Sugar Cane League. In the following paragraphs, is a brief history of Audubon Sugar Institute and the effects such cooporative efforts have had on ASI's history.

Following the history article on Audubon Sugar Institute is an article prepared by Dr. Sonny Viator, Iberia Research Station, LSU AgCenter, in which he outlines the results of a cooperative effort between himself, a grower, and a commercial entity. In his article Dr. Viator discusses the advantages and disadvantages of growing a herbicide resistant soybean crop on fallow ground vs. a fallow-plow program. In his article, Dr. Viator presents data that was collected in 2004 from plots grown with the assistance of Ricky Gonsoulin on Gonsoulin Farms of New Iberia, LA. Monsanto Co.'s Chemistry Sales Representative Mr. Ken Naquin provided additional technical assistance.

F.C. Schaffer and Audubon Sugar Institute

Back in 1976 (29 years ago!!) Harold Birkett was finishing up his PhD. at LSU under John Seip. When Dr. Seip died, Dr. Joe Polack moved from the LSU Chemical Engineering Department to Audubon Sugar Factory. With the aid of Gilbert Durbin, the General Manager of the American Sugar Cane League, and the support of President Martin Woodin and Chancellor Paul Murrill of LSU, the name of Audubon Sugar Factory was changed to Audubon Sugar Institute. In addition to the name change, the mission of Audubon was changed to encompass research and technical service to the Louisiana industry. Furthermore, it was decided to get separate line item funding from the state legislature. With a lot of help from Lloyd Lauden, the ASCL's Agronomist and Field Representative, President Woodin and Chancellor Murrill successfully obtained, from the state legislature, the funding that was needed. ASI had, for the first time, funds with which to hire staff.

At that time, Harold Birkett was already an employee of F. C. Schaffer and Associates, Inc. He had been assisting Dr. Seip in preparing regular factory reports on the co-op factories for the Bank of Co-ops. With the death of Dr. Seip, Harold was the logical one to inherit these duties. These reports were the origin of the weekly factory reports and are still published by ASI to this day. Harold was clearly vital to the ASI's new mission. Mr. Schaffer magnanimously allowed LSU to hire Harold as a part-time Adjunct Associate Professor, a LSU post he still holds.

The agreement between ASI and Mr. Schaffer was that Harold would spend half of his time with ASI during the crop (or fall semester). Mr.

Schaffer not only let Harold have the time off, but no doubt somewhat made up for any loss of salary that Harold incurred on account of the meager LSU pay scale. However, Harold's time working for ASI soon grew to full time during the crop. There is no doubt that this was a significant sacrifice by F.C. Schaffer and Associates Inc., as Harold, a vice-President of the company, was a key engineer on many of Schaffer's worldwide projects. The arrangement still exists to this day.

No one who knows anything about Louisiana sugar mills in the last 29 years has the slightest doubt about the contributions of Dr. Birkett to ASI and the Louisiana sugar industry. But these contributions would not have happened without the little known, mostly unappreciated, behind-the-scenes generosity of Mr. Francis Schaffer.

Fallow-period Management Options

H. P. "Sonny" Viator, Iberia Research Station, LSU AgCenter
Ricky Gonsoulin, Gonsoulin Farms, New Iberia, LA
Ken Naquin, CSR, Monsanto Co., Youngsville, LA

The fallow period has traditionally been used to repair the land, control perennial weeds, and prepare an adequate seedbed for planting the next cycle of sugarcane. Chemical fallow management became feasible with the advent of herbicides like Roundup® (Monsanto). Additional options for fallow management include growing rotational crops, such as soybeans or wheat, and succession planting. These practices can contribute both to the grower's bottom line and provide protection against excessive soil loss during the long exposure of the fallow period.

Stringent water quality standards are scheduled to be implemented in the near future. Enforcement of the 1972 Clean Water Act calls for the development of plans that reasonably assure attainment of water quality standards. The sugarcane industry must address the problem of soil sediment loss from fallow fields, which are typically open to the elements for several months. Possible scenarios for achieving topsoil protection and reducing grower inputs were examined and are reported on in this article.

Procedures:

A comparison of fallow-period management options was accomplished during the 2004 growing season on a Galvez silt loam site in Iberia Parish. The study consisted of planting LCP 85-384 on plots which were managed during the fallow period as follows: 1) conventionally managed, 2) occupied by a reduced-tilled soybean green manure crop and 3) with retained plant residue from the final harvesting of green cane in the production cycle.

Conventional management consisted of residue burning and tillage operations to destroy stubble, control weeds and prepare a seedbed. Herbicide applications and land leveling, normally done for conventional fallow, were not done.

Green manure soybeans were planted and grown with reduced tillage on rows on which residue remained. Roundup® Ultra Max (Monsanto), at the rate of 48 ounces/acre, was sprayed three times over the soybean crop. Soybeans were plowed down a week before planting cane.

Plots with full residue retention were not tilled but received three applications of Roundup® Ultra Max (Monsanto), with the first applied at the rate of 64 ounces/acre to kill volunteer sugarcane and subsequent applications applied at 48 ounces/acre. Seedbeds for all three approaches were prepared using two cultivations.

Results:

Concerns that stubble pieces from the previous crop would not adequately decompose and interfere with seedbed preparation and planting were not realized for either of the non-conventional options. Weed pressure, principally perennial weeds like bermudagrass and johnsongrass, was moderate during the fallow period but easily controlled by the herbicide treatments. Meaningful differences among the three approaches were not observed for weed infestations, spring emergence and stalk population counts.

As shown in the table below, plant cane was indifferent to various fallow management treatments. Both cane and sugar yields were statistically equivalent for the three scenarios. The cost of managing the retained residue/no-till plots was considerably less than the other approaches to handling the fallow period. Although soybeans in this experiment were grown for green manure, growing soybeans as a cash crop makes that alternative particularly attractive from both an economic and conservation standpoint. Additional benefits of the two alternative management scenarios are the elimination of residue burning and organic matter retention.

Influence of Fallow-period Management on Plant Cane Yield			
Fallow-period treatment	Tons of cane/acre	Pounds of sugar/acre	Cost of activities/acre[1,2]
Conventional management	30.7	7,659	$156.76
Green manure soybeans with reduced tillage	30.0	7,588	$183.12
Residue retained with no tillage	31.3	8,014	$116.88
LSD .05	NS	NS	
C.V. %	7.8%	10.5%	

[1]*Budgets, generated for each scenario, reflect activities from immediately after harvest through seedbed preparation for planting and are predicated on projected 2005 cost estimates. Interest on operating capital is not included in the costs.*

[2]*Projected prices for glyphosate could be substantially lower than that which is contained in the budgets.*

Not all fields are good candidates for the management described in the non-conventional options. The field chosen for this study was neither badly rutted nor heavily infested with perennial weeds. Growers accustomed to reversing rows or deep sub soiling would have to modify the approach.

The LSU AgCenter has a number of researchers addressing the influence of sugarcane cropping systems on water quality. Findings from those investigations and the one reported on here will serve as the basis for the development of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sugarcane. While BMPs are designed principally for the purpose of protecting the environment, the ones most likely to be adopted by growers are those that are economically viable alternatives to existing production practices.

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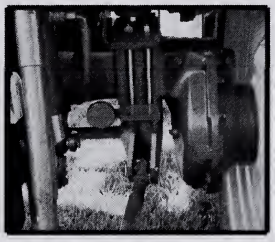

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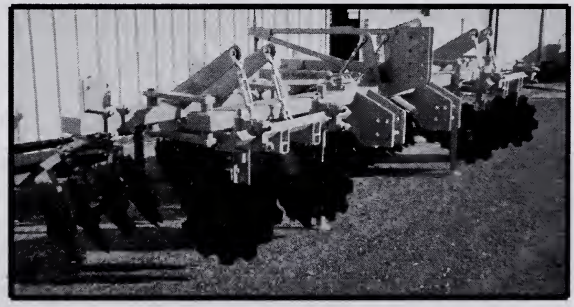

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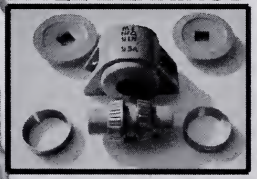

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

Something New From Government
To Tax, Or Not To Tax, That Is The Question
Maybe Fees Will Work - Getting To The Mill

You can expect the annual flood of news from Baton Rouge during the coming session of the legislature to be very focused on budget matters. This is the first year for the new system in the legislature where only tax, revenue and budget can be acted upon - sort of.

Before the voters approved this new scheme two years ago, you could only visit these items in even numbered years. Odd numbered years were reserved for all other legislative business plus the budget. The new way, besides flipping the subject matter - an odd/even year scenario - a new wrinkle has been added. Even in "fiscal only" years, like this one, each legislator may file up to five regular bills.

There are 144 senators and representatives so we could get about 700 bills. That isn't many compared to the three to five thousand bills we usually get. It will be interesting to see what these five bills look like. It just might show constituents what the real priorities are for a given lawmaker. This just might be an abstract lesson in legislative efficiency.

To Tax, Or Not To Tax, That Is The Question

There is a budget shortfall, but we are not sure how "short" we are. The Revenue Estimating Conference will tell us soon what we can expect from revenues and the Governor's team will soon tell us what we need to spend to keep the state going. The Governor has made a couple of non-traditional moves to try to make the budget process more reliable. First, she asked the Revenue Estimating Conference to meet earlier than ever to give her a target on revenues. Second, she asked department heads to cut last year's budget to the bone. There will still be a gap.

Taxes are a red-hot item this year. The Stelly Plan kicked in last year and the income portion of the plan hit citizens for the first time and they are hitting back. The sales tax increase feature didn't cause much of a stir because it was paid in very small increments each time you made a purchase, but the income tax part of the plan was a "big ticket" for everyone. And then along came the reassessment on property tax that many people experienced.

Such tax paying experiences caused people to get active at election time and our most recent election proved that it is unhealthy to tax and then run for office!

Maybe Fees Will Work

How do you spell t-a-x in the middle of the Boston Tea Party? Maybe you spell it f-e-e. LABI, the major voice for business in the legislature, predicts a big appetite for fees. The state law clearly disallows a fee to be collected in excess of its intended purpose, but that law has been routinely ignored since it was passed. Fees are usually applied to business transactions and are used to regulate the industry from which they are collected. But, there are ways to get around that, and major revenues can be collected from a simple fee.

Getting To The Mill

Nothing has been filed yet, but there are ideas being discussed about the high cost of transportation. Farmers who have a long haul to the mill are looking for some relief. Fuel costs even hurt the short-haul farmers. There is some talk about a fuel subsidy for the haulers and there is some talk about changing the existing law on weight limits. The League's Legislative Committee will keep you informed as these issues develop.

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By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Utilization of Sugarcane Biomass for Ethanol and Chemicals Production

The utilization of the sugarcane biomass for the production of ethanol and other chemicals has attracted great interest. It has the potential to add substantial value to the sugarcane crop, but considerable work needs to be done before any new processes can be proved to be economically viable. It is appropriate to be working on this now, particularly with the renewed focus on the use of renewable resources, and the importance of its environmental impact.

Audubon Sugar Institute is now actively involved in this area. Significant funding from the Department of Energy is making possible a joint venture with the Michigan Biotechnology Institute, which could have far-reaching consequences.

Commercialization of the biorefinery concept incorporated in this effort could open up some new and profitable agricultural opportunities. It might then be possible to grow high biomass cane, bred for its mass yield per acre rather than its sucrose. Work is already underway at the USDA research station at Houma. It would also become attractive to bring all the cane tops and leaves or cane leaf matter (CLM) to the mill for processing. Bagasse and CLM could be combined, or more likely processed separately, to produce products for value. The addition of CLM in an existing sugar mill could potentially almost double the amount of bagasse available and helps solve a disposal problem.

However CLM has a higher ash content and in particular, the ratio of alkali metals to silica is high and so will lead to slagging and fouling in the boilers if burnt on its own. It should therefore be combined with the bagasse, after drying or dewatering and shredding, and burnt together with the bagasse. The CLM is preferably not crushed with the cane, as it contributes to a higher impurity load and the extra fiber load reduces the capacity of the mill. Leaves and tops can be easily removed from chopper harvested cane by blowing off the trashy material, with virtually no loss of billets, in the conveyors leading to the mill.

A large number of claims have been made of how value-added products can be produced from sugarcane biomass. Apart from the production of paper from bagasse and cogeneration using bagasse as a fuel in boiler, very few of these are economically viable. The challenge is to find those processes, which when incorporated into a biorefinery, will lead to products of value that justify the capital investment. It is anticipated that the capital required could be large, and economies of scale obtained through high volume processing would need to be realized.

Large-scale usage of bagasse or other biomass for ethanol or chemicals has not yet been demonstrated, although many different schemes have been devised in the laboratory. Maximum value from bagasse can in theory be obtained by separating bagasse into its three major components, cellulose, lignin and hemicellulose, and deriving products with high value from them. Active research and recent technological improvements are likely to make commercialization possible in the future. A flow sheet showing some of the interesting options is given in Figure 1. The boxes in this figure representing treatments are numbered and are referred to below:

1. Bagasse as produced from the mill is separated into its constituents with difficulty. The processes which follow are all made easier by a pre-treatment of the bagasse, which may be one of a number of options. These could be ball milling or grinding, water extraction under pressure, steam explosion, involving pressurizing the bagasse and then releasing the pressure rapidly, or a patented treatment such as the AFEX process, similar to steam explosion but utilizing ammonia to augment the process. All are aimed at making the constituents more readily available to treatments following.
2. The bagasse fiber can be made into non-woven textiles with little further treatment. In some cases a caustic treatment has been proposed to improve the binding between fibers. The products may be used in horticulture as biodegradable flowerpots, as poultry bedding or as geo-textiles or remediation mats.
3. Hemi-cellulose may be recovered as a product itself or as an intermediate for further processing.
4. Dilute acid hydrolysis (usually dilute sulfuric acid) releases pentoses from the pentosans constituting the hemicellulose. The treatment must be carefully controlled to prevent the subsequent conversion of pentoses to furfural. Some acetic acid is also produced during this step. An autohydrolysis process is possible at temperatures above 320°C, where the acetic acid released serves the function of the dilute acid in the hydrolyzing hemicellulose to xylans.
5. The pentoses produced are mainly xylose and arabinose. Work done by the SMRI has shown that hydrolysis with 0.7% sulfuric acid at 260°F for 2 h with a liquid/solid ratio of 5:1 leads to a hydrolysate with the following composition:

Xylose	2.14 g/100 g
Arabinose	0.24 g/100 g
Glucose	0.31 g/100 g
Acetic acid	0.44 g/100 g
Furfural	250 g/l

The sugars need to be separated to use them in subsequent processing. This is most conveniently done by chromatographic separation.
6. Biotransformation of xylose provides different routes to new products. Xylitol is conventionally produced by hydrogenation of xylose under pressure. New bio-based routes are being sought to a lower cost route for xylitol production and other products.
7. Arabinose chemistry is a relatively neglected option for adding value to the arabinose fraction of the pentoses.
8. Alkaline treatment of the solid residue after dilute acid hydrolysis removes the lignin from the residue. This is essentially a pulping process, leading to a liquid stream containing the lignin and a solid cellulose product. Other processes using organic solvents have also been proposed.
9. The lignin stream should be produced in a way that does not degrade the lignin, making it a more useful by-product than the lignin from paper pulping. Lignin is recovered in a variety of ways to enable useful products to be recovered.
10. The solid stream from alkaline treatment is largely cellulose. Suitable treatment should enable it to be produced in a pure form for use in pharmaceutical and medical applications.
11. Cellulose itself may be hydrolyzed. It is composed of long chains of glucose molecules and the end-products of the hydrolysis are mainly the monosaccharide glucose and the disaccharide cellobiose. Cellulose may be hydrolyzed by a strong acid treatment, but the process is expensive and yields intractable effluent problems. The approach being followed by a number of research organizations at present is enzyme hydrolysis, generally using a strain of *Trichoderma reesei* to produce the enzyme. Reducing the cost of enzyme production is necessary to make this process viable.
12. The sugars produced from sucrose hydrolysis are easily fermented to ethanol. This is the goal of many initiatives under way to produce sugars from the enzymatic hydrolysis of cellulose.
13. There are other potential products of higher value, which may be produced from the

cellulose hydrolysate, particularly if the hydrolysate may be easily purified before fermentation.

14. Bio-transformation of cellobiose also provides some opportunities for the production of higher value products.

In addition to this scheme for processing bagasse, gasification of bagasse can be considered, either to derive additional power through a combined cycle incorporating a gas turbine and a heat recovery boiler, or to produce a synthetic gas for use as or conversion to a fuel.

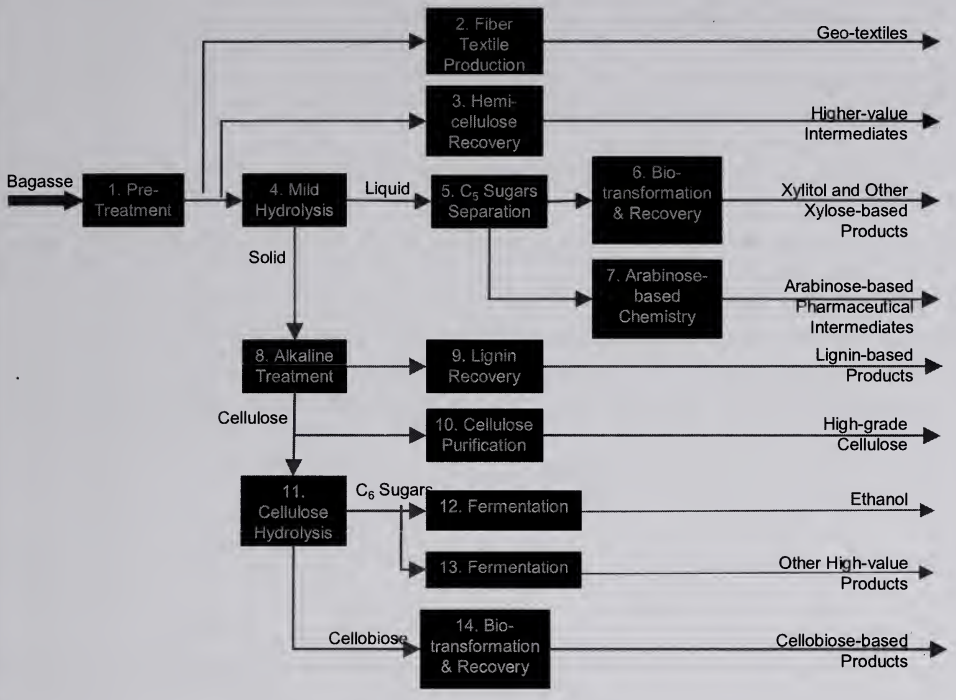

Figure 1. Integrated bagasse processing flow sheet

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III	700-1,499.9	Martin & Poche, Inc.	Hymel Farms, Inc.
IV	1,500+	Glynn Rivet	Olivia Plantation

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I	100-299.9	Mike Goode Farms	Donna Purpera
II	300-699.9	Ricky Rivet	Flint Langlois
III	700-1,499.9	Engemann Farms	LeBlanc Brothers
IV	1,500+	Charles. G. Landry & Sons, Inc.	Charles. B. Beaud

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Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

Craig Caillier

43rd President of the American Sugar Cane League

The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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Craig Caillier

43rd President of the American Sugar Cane League

Mr. Caillier is a graduate of Father Teurlings Catholic High School (1979) and the University of Southwestern Louisiana (1983) where he holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a Major in Finance. Upon graduation, he was employed by M. A. Patout & Son, Ltd. where he served in various capacities until 1994 when he was named General Manager and C.E. O. of Sterling Sugars, Inc. In 2001, he returned to M. A. Patout & Son, Ltd. and currently serves as President & C.E.O. He has been an active member of the American Sugar Cane League having served as past Treasurer and Vice President, along with chairing various committees.

He is married to the former Elizabeth Landry; they are the parents of one son, Ethan Paul. They reside in New Iberia, Louisiana and are members of St. Peter's Catholic Church.

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

Annual Meeting
Congratulations and Welcome Aboard

What a showing!! Some 275 cane farmers, mill representatives, land owners and affiliated industry representatives gathered for the 82nd Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League of the USA, Inc. John Gay presided over his final meeting as our President.

In his "State of the League" address President Gay mentioned that poor crops, difficult economic times, reorganization, strategic planning, management turnover, mill closures, new mill proposals and free trade agreements were the more perplexing issues faced by the organization during his two-year term. While all of these issues are omnipotent, we should focus our attention on the real message that he so eloquently delivered in his opening and closing remarks.

John began his comments saying, "The League is truly your organization and your attendance here demonstrates your involvement and support. Membership support is the lifeblood of any organization, without it we cease to exist. So on behalf of the entire board I thank you for that support."

He concluded his address with the following. "As I come to the end of my term as your President I reflect back not only on the events that took place but on the fine people I have had the privilege to work with. We have in this sugar industry the most dedicated, responsible, and hard-working leaders any industry could hope to have. Not one time did I call on someone to serve in any capacity that they did not roll up their sleeves and give the job their best. To each of you I am grateful. I am thankful also for the respect shown to me and the office of the President by members at all levels. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you.

God bless you and God bless the American Sugar Cane League." Very suitable remarks describing such an outstanding organization.

Congratulations and Welcome Aboard

With the conclusion of the League Annual Membership meeting a new term for newly elected officers and board commences. We would like to congratulate our new officers: Craig Caillier, President, Jessie Breaux, Vice-President, Mike Daigle, Treasurer, and Greg Nolan, Secretary, and wish them success as leaders of this industry. Our staff, the rest of the board, and myself look forward to working with you this year on the challenges our industry must confront.

We would also like to say "welcome aboard" and congratulate grower members Charles Guidry from Erath, Tim Hebert, Thibodaux, Jim Harper, Cheneyville, Jacob Giardina, Thibodaux, and processor at-large member C.J. Daigle from Belle Rose for being elected to serve on the ASCL Board for this year.

The League is always searching for new talent in the industry. If you would like to get involved by serving on one of the many League committees, please contact me at the League office or ask a current director to submit your name and interests to this office.

Jerry McKee Receives President's Award

Jerry McKee, pictured with his daughter, Geneive, his wife Mina, and his son, Bill, receives the 2005 President's Award from President John F. Gay for his outstanding and dedicated service to the Louisiana sugar industry.

REMINDER:

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Ag Spending On Budget Table
New USDA Deputy Secretary
CAFTA Proponents Gearing Up For Vote
Industry Leaders Meet New Ag Secretary
Energy Bill Movement Likely
USDA WASDE March Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

As I reported last month, the President's FY06 budget proposal called for cuts of nearly $7 billion in agricultural spending over ten years, including a tax on sugar producers in the form of a 1.2% marketing assessment on sugar loans, a tax that we estimate at approximately $4.32 per short ton, raw value. Since then, the Congressional Budget Office scored the Administration's agriculture spending cuts at $8 billion.

The House and Senate budget committees came up with their own spending targets in early March. The House budget target included $5.3 billion in mandatory agricultural spending cuts, while the Senate budget target include $2.8 billion in ag spending cuts. The Senate version also includes language supportive of tightening payment limits. Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) is preparing an amendment to restore all ag spending cuts made in the budget mark and will likely offer that amendment when the budget measure moves to the Senate floor. Support for the Baucus amendment may be bipartisan and could be sufficient to prevail in the Senate. A coalition of commodity and producer groups has continued to hold the line, arguing that there should be no cuts in the agricultural spending commitments made in the 2002 farm bill.

The House and Senate must vote on their respective budget targets before reconciling those targets in a budget conference. It is possible that one or both bodies will be unable to approve a budget measure, which would further complicate leadership plans to tackle other big ticket items such as social security reform. Congress has failed to agree on a unified budget benchmark in two of the past three years.

New USDA Deputy Secretary

Chuck Connor, White House advisor on agriculture, has been named to fill the vacant Deputy Secretary slot at USDA. Connor, formerly of the Corn Refiners Association, served as chief of staff for Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Dick Lugar (R-IN) in the 1990's.

CAFTA Proponents Gearing Up For Vote

Tentative dates have been mentioned for beginning the process for approving CAFTA in early April, perhaps leading to a vote by early May. Proponents and opponents alike have suggested that the vote will be extremely close and that the supporters may be approximately 35 votes short of the 218 votes needed to pass the House. Still, the Republican leadership in the House and President Bush have an impressive record of twisting enough arms to win any given vote. The Senate Finance Committee has planned a hearing on CAFTA in

early April that may signal the beginning of the public relations drive for approval.

Industry Leaders Meet New Ag Secretary

Representatives from the sugar sector met with new Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns in mid-March to introduce themselves and to urge the Department to make an early and conservative announcement of the Overall Allotment Quantity for the coming marketing year. Craig Caillier represented the League at this meeting.

Energy Bill Movement Likely

Having debated the merits of passing a new energy bill over the course of five years, it now appears that the climate is right for passage of legislation to improve the air-quality standards of transportation fuels and to implement new tax incentives to promote the use of renewable fuels. We continue to work to include sucrose ethanol among the renewable fuels options for US consumers.

USDA WASDE March Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its March World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2004/05 beginning stocks and total production was unchanged at 1,897,000 short tons (raw value) and 8,117,000 short tons (raw value), respectively. Beet production was increased by 28,000 short tons to 4,727,000, while cane production was lowered by the same amount to 3,390,000. Louisiana's production was lowered to 1,260,000 from 1,290,000 short tons last month. Imports were unchanged, as were ending stocks. While there were no changes to exports, USDA saw a 75,000 ton increase in deliveries, with a 100,000 ton increase in food deliveries and a 25,000 ton reduction in reexports and non-edibles. As a result, ending stocks were reduced to 1,473,000 from 1,548,000 short tons last month. Stocks to use fell to 14.5 percent from 15.3 percent last month.

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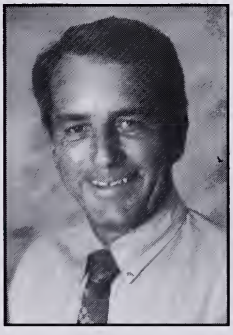

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report
Varieties on the Secondary Stations
Re-Certification Program For Sugarcane Smoke Management

Throughout the industry much of the fall growth in fields used for seedcane and in early-planted fields has not been removed at the writing of his article on March 13th. In general, fields are more overgrown with weeds than they have been in many years. Nearly every-other-day rains from mid-January through the middle of March have delayed the application of herbicides. Many growers who are accustomed to having their itch grass herbicide applications completed by the first of March are just getting started with their applications.

The frequent rains have delayed the spraying of plant cane and stubble fields alike. There are still a number of rutted stubble fields and headlands that are not yet well drained or repaired. In an effort to get into the wet fields, a number of growers here on the Teche have resorted to the use of lightweight spray rigs. Others have equipped some of their lighter 4-wheel drive tractors with steel wheels, similar to those used in rice fields, along with small spray tanks. Because of the wet fields and the high winds, growers must be very selective of which fields to spray.

At this time, in fields of younger stubble cane in which the residue was removed, the stands appear to be marking the row very well. However, the fields in which the residue was not removed seem to be somewhat slower. Additionally, in many stubble fields the whitening of leaves from the use of ripener is very obvious. In fields of plant cane, that were up to a good stand in the fall, good stands are quite apparent if the re-growth has been removed. In most cases, upon closer observation, much green cane can be found under the canopy of dead cane in fields that have not been clipped or burned.

Some plant cane will be lost due to the dry field conditions in which they were planted. Luckily, for most growers, a great percentage of their acreage was not severely affected by the dry planting conditions.

With a little break in the weather and the drying of fields, the appearance of the industry will change quite rapidly as growers clean up grassy fields and plow out fields of older stubble. The next operation that growers will concentrate on is fertilization. Dr. Ben Legendre, Sugarcane Specialist and Professor, LSU AgCenter, reminds growers that; *Using nitrogen fertilizer rates higher than recommended as "insurance" may not be cost effective in the long term, especially with the high cost of nitrogen. Time nitrogen applications to when crop is actively growing: don't fertilize too early. Previous research has shown that optimal nitrogen utilization occurs when the crop is actively growing and fertilizer is applied after April 15th.*

Varieties on the Secondary Stations

Last fall only one variety, Ho 95-988, was replanted on the secondary stations. Ho 95-988 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry in 2004. In the fall of 2004, there was only a limited supply of this new variety available from the commercial seed companies and none from the American Sugar Cane League. Because Ho 95-988 was dropped from the testing program, it was also dropped from the seed increase program. The second stubble of Ho 95-988 on the primary station was tested for RSD. None was detected,

but the seed was hot water treated before planting on the primary stations in the fall of 2002. The following fall (2003) first-progeny hot-water treated seed of Ho 95-988 was distributed to the secondary stations from which it will be sold this fall (2005).

The procedure for Ho 95-988 is the same as with all other varieties, the release to the Louisiana sugar industry comes after second stubble data is collected in outfield tests. Ho 95-988 has run its full course of the testing program and second stubble data was available for consideration at the time of its release. There was **no data** collected for this variety in any of the outfield tests harvested during 2004. The data from previous harvest years indicate that Ho 95-988 has a lot to offer the Louisiana sugar industry. Although it is susceptible to the sugarcane borer, its yields have been very good in sugar per acre and it also appears to be a very strong stubbling cane.

This past fall (2004) two varieties, L 99-226 and L 99-233, were distributed to the secondary stations. If either is released to the industry, it will not be until the fall of 2006. Both varieties were harvested in plant cane and first stubble outfield tests. In plant cane and first stubble tests, L99-226 was significantly better than LCP 85-384 in the yield components of sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, sugar per ton, and stalk weight. Its population was significantly lower in both plant cane and first stubble test plots.

In the same group of tests, L99-233 was significantly higher than the standard LCP 85-384 in plant cane and first stubble for sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, and population. In plant cane, its yield of sugar per ton was significantly higher, with the stalk weights for both LCP 85-384 and L 99-233 about equal in both plant cane and first stubble. A full report on the outfield test data collected during the 2004 harvest will be reported in a later editon of the Sugar Bulletin.

Re-Certification Program For Sugarcane Smoke Management

In 2000 the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF), began a program to certify managers for the prescribed burning of sugarcane. This was initiated in an effort to maintain the cane industry's ability to burn cane trash. The educational program was developed by the American Sugar Cane League (ASCL), the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the LSU AgCenter. **All sugarcane burn manager certifications are expired**. The original certification was for five years, which means it is now time to re-certify. The re-certification program for sugarcane smoke management will be conducted similar to that of the pesticide re-certification program. This program will be presented at sugarcane field days and grower meetings throughout the cane belt. Personnel from LDAF will issue the re-certification cards to those who participate in meetings in which the re-certification program is presented. The first training session is scheduled for May and then at each of the following field days. When a complete list of meetings and field days becomes available, it will be published in the Sugar Bulletin. It is very important that growers protect their ability to legally burn sugarcane fields by becoming re-certified.

Because of the problems that have occurred from the burning of cane under power lines, **Entergy wishes to educate as many growers as possible concerning their (the grower's) possible liabilities if they cause a power disruption while burning cane under power lines**.

The program for re-certification at the field days will include a video to cover all of the important topics, which include the harm created by burning cane under high power lines. Entergy will provide the funds for the production of the smoke management video.

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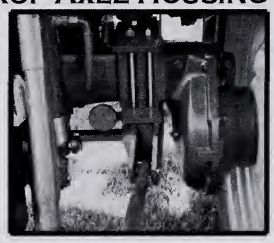

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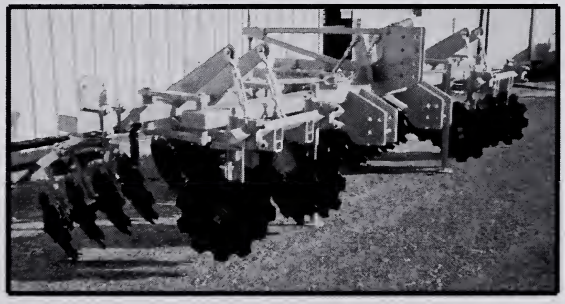

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

Teacher Pay Raise to Be Hot Issue This Year

The only issue likely to create as much noise in the legislature this year as the state budget itself is an item in it: pay raises for teachers. At some point in every Governor's tenure, teacher pay raises will rear its ugly head. Governor Blanco is no exception and this looks like her year. She, like most of her predecessors, have announced the good intentions of bringing Louisiana's teachers in line with the pay of teachers in other states, at least in line with the average of other southern states.

When pollsters ask around they get an overwhelming majority of respondents who say they want the teachers to get a decent raise. But depending on how you ask the questions (how you ask questions in a poll is an art form) you get an equal and opposite response if you ask "are you willing to pay higher taxes in order to give the teachers their raise?"

There are several reasons for this willingness to give, but reluctance to fund the teacher raise. One reason not to fund is that a high percentage of voters have their kids in private and parochial schools. Many have done that because they feel public schools are inadequate. They pay tuition and feel the financial pinch for that and are not willing to pay more taxes for something they for which they see no direct personal benefit.

Another reason is that quite a few people feel that there is enough money paid in taxes to give the teachers the salary they deserve, but that budget priorities are not skewed in favor of teachers. The problems with priorities favoring teachers are not set by the Governor or by the legislature.

The MFP (Minimum Foundation Program) pays the state portion of almost all education funding in the state. The MFP is combined with local taxes to constitute the local education budgets. The MFP is a formula developed by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). The formula produces a budget number, which is presented to the legislature. This number cannot be cut. There is a provision in the law that says, "if the legislature should cut the formula budget the budget will revert to the previous year's funding level, plus a cost of living increase." The lawmakers are caught between a rock and a hard place. So is the Governor.

Another important factor in all of this is the way the pay raise is always presented in a bundle with pay increases for cafeteria workers, maintenance people, bus drivers and others. This makes it much harder to do.

Statistical analysis of MFP spending shows some disturbing trends. In the period between 1973 and 2003 the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reports:

* Enrollment dropped almost 20%
* School employment increased 26%
* Funding increased over 400%

Everyone acknowledges that the problem is eating at the vitality of the state. Every aspect of life is influenced by education. An educated work force is a top priority for economic development prospects. As many negatives as there seem to be in this situation the over riding factor is that there in nothing as important as a good education. A wise man once said, "a child is a message we send to a future we will not see." The Governor and the legislators are hoping to find a way to properly reward those who are educating our children.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Retrospective And Prospective

Each year about this time it is customary for this column to comment on the recent and current environmental situation of the Louisiana sugar cane industry, and to look ahead for problems and/or opportunities in the offing. Last year's report was that most environmental matters of concern are of a regulatory/ enforcement nature, and each of these issues were mostly "on hold" because of Federal legislative and administrative "gridlock" related to election year politics. Most of the desperately needed reforms of environmental and energy legislation, and related administrative action, were discussed and advocated or condemned during the 2004 political campaigns, and although the elections are now history, the needed reforms have not come to pass. In fact, on February 16, 2005, a Senate committee postponed taking up President Bush's "Clean Skies" initiative in order to (hopefully) sort out the bipartisan bickering. Thus, and since no very bad environmental problems befell the Louisiana sugar cane industry during 2004, and because pro-business interests seem to have done well in the national elections, an environmental "status quo" report for now, but an optimistic one, should not be entirely unwelcome.

Contrary to what environmental activists would have you believe, an environmental friendly situation now exists throughout the Louisiana sugar cane industry. Water pollution problems once attributed to sugar mill operations including fish kills and other severe water quality degradation no longer occur, the problems having been solved at great expense many years ago. Cane farmers have implemented agricultural best management practices (BMPs), and thus sugar cane farming does not severely impact stream water quality. Smoke from bagasse boilers and burning cane fields was once a seasonal nuisance, but these sources were never the cause of a violation of any state or national ambient air quality standard nor was the smoke even proven to cause any chronic health problem. With the bagasse boiler and cane field burning controls now in place, having been installed to comply with State and Federal air pollution control regulations, even the seasonal smoke nuisance problem is no longer significant. Also, residuals management plans implemented by all sugar mills divert residual materials to markets or back to the cane fields of origin in order to enhance and preserve productivity and to comply with the objectives State and Federal resource conservation and recovery legislation. The use of pesticides or other hazardous materials has been minimized, and are now used only in strict accord with applicable rules and regulation. The bad news is that all this environmental good news does not really matter – the cane sugar industry must still comply with State and Federal environmental laws that continue to expand in scope and stringency, including many that are unnecessary, counter-productive and unaffordable. Such is the state of environmental mismanagement in this country.

A good example of shamefully wasteful mismanagement of this nation's environmental protection effort is USEPA's proposed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for coastal Louisiana river basins, reported here in the January

2005 edition of *The Sugar Bulletin*. There is no violation of mercury water quality standards in any Louisiana stream and thus no legal basis on which to impose TMDLs. No environmental benefit would accrue from regulating mercury discharges. However, imposition of a TMDL for mercury would give environmentalist regulators the authority and an excuse to regulate or prohibit cane farming activities because surficial soils in south Louisiana are naturally high in mercury content. The excuse for EPA's power grab is that fish in the Gulf of Mexico have what environmentalists say is a high mercury content but there is no scientific basis for the assertion. Such mismanagement must be contested, and there may be some help on the horizon. *The Advocate* on Wednesday, February 16, 2005, reported that a U.S. House Resources Committee majority staff report says that the "dangers of toxic mercury pollution in the environment have been overstated," and that "mercury levels in fish have remained constant or declined slightly since the 1970s. Scaring people away from consuming fish is creating a public health crisis in its own right." It seems that a growing number of Congressmen are getting wise to the EPA-environmentalist mercury pollution scam.

A long-standing concern of the entire sugar industry is the status of boiler rules mandated by 1990 Amendments of the Clean Air Act. Congress amended the law at the behest of environmentalists who hoped that the changes would classify bagasse boilers as solid waste incinerators and/or hazardous air pollutant emitters and thus be put out of business by requiring prohibitively costly pollution control systems. The American Sugar Cane League and Louisiana sugar mills had major fund expenditures testing boiler emissions proving that hazardous air pollutant (HAP) emissions from bagasse combustion are minor and that bagasse in not a solid waste but rather a valuable commodity (bio-fuel) and has been so for centuries. Draft boiler rules were published January 13, 2003, but no final rules have as yet been promulgated. The new rules do not have a direct impact on Louisiana sugar mills but do have an indirect effect because the rules include a description of what is the best available pollution control technology for bagasse boilers. When sugar mills expand production capacity and increase emissions beyond the 250 tons per year limit of "PSD" regulations, the new or improved bagasse boilers must comply with these more stringent pollution control technology standards.

What happens in Congress on President Bush's Clear Skies initiative and on energy legislation can have a profound effect on the entire sugar industry, not just the environmental aspects. Any legislation promoting renewable energy (biofuels utilization), alcohol fuel use and/or subsidies, and cogeneration will expand economic and environmental opportunities. The Clear Skies initiative includes resolution of the long standing New Source Review (NSR) dilemma, and could make it feasible to repair and upgrade old age boilers rather than requiring abandonment as demanded by environmentalists.

Here's hoping for a more upbeat report next year.

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Johnsongrass Control with Asulox and Envoke

by Jim Griffin

Johnsongrass can emerge from seeds germinating in the soil (seedling johnsongrass) and from underground rhizomes (rhizome johnsongrass). For johnsongrass seeds to germinate soil temperature would need to be around 65°F. In contrast, rhizome johnsongrass can emerge during the winter and early spring when soil temperature is cool. In early March in the southern area of the cane belt johnsongrass was as tall as 4 inches in some fields. Soil applied herbicides to include Prowl, Dupont K-4, Sencor, Sinbar, Command, and Treflan will control seedling johnsongrass but have little activity on rhizome johnsongrass. To control johnsongrass after it has emerged requires use of Asulox/Asulam either alone or in combination with Envoke.

Asulox/Asulam Programs

Asulox/Asulam should be applied broadcast at 4 qt/A (2 qt/A on a 36 inch band on a 72 inch row) plus nonionic surfactant at 1 to 2 qt/100 gallons of water or crop oil concentrate at 1 gallon/100 gallons of water. A spray volume of 15 to 30 gallons of water per acre should be used. Asulox/Asulam at this rate will also provide some control of itchgrass and other annual grasses. A second application of Asulox/Asulam at 3 to 4 qt/A broadcast (1.5 to 2 qt/A banded) can be made to johnsongrass regrowth, usually about eight weeks after the first application. This follow up herbicide application can increase johnsongrass control, but may not increase yield over that obtained with a single early season application. Sugarcane injury is more likely when Asulox/Asulam is applied to sugarcane stressed from drought, excessive temperature, or flooded soils, especially after June 1.

Asulox/Asulam can also be applied as a spot treatment in fields where johnsongrass is scattered. The most accurate and economical method of spot treating is to use a calibrated sprayer at a constant speed with the operator turning the spray nozzles on and off as needed. If a high-volume "cattle gun" nozzle is used for spot treatment, apply a 2% solution of Asulox/Asulam (2 gallons of herbicide plus 98 gallons of water) plus nonionic surfactant or crop oil concentrate. To avoid sugarcane injury, spray only to wet the foliage and do not drench.

In visiting with growers at parish meeting this year I have heard reports that johnsongrass control is increased when Asulox or Asulam is applied with Prowl EC. In our research we have seen increased control in some cases with a band application of 2 qt/A Asulox plus 1 qt/A Prowl EC when johnsongrass was in the boot stage, but the response has not been consistent. Prowl is normally applied in early to mid March with the primary intent to control weeds as a soil treatment. Application of Prowl with Asulox or Asulam in mid-April may not be the most cost effective way to use Prowl.

Envoke and Asulox/Asulam Programs

Envoke at 0.3 oz/A broadcast (0.15 oz/A on a 36 inch band on a 72 inch row) will not provide complete control of rhizome johnsongrass. A broadcast application of Envoke at 0.3 oz/A (0.15 oz/A banded) with Asulox/Asulam at 2 qt/A (1 qt/A banded) has provided more consistent rhizome johnsongrass control than Asulox/Asulam applied alone at 4 qt/A (2 qt/A banded). At these rates the cost of a banded application of Envoke plus Asulox would be about the same as the cost of Asulox applied alone (around $25/A). As specified earlier, a high quality nonionic surfactant or

crop oil concentrate should be added to the spray mixture. Envoke will also control itchgrass, morningglory, and nutsedge. Weeds treated with Envoke will turn yellow, red, or purple after several days and weed death generally occurs 1 to 3 weeks after application depending on the specific weed and growing conditions. Envoke can cause some yellowing and white banding on leaves present in the whorl at application as well as slight stunting but recovery is rapid and sugarcane and sugar yield have not been affected.

General Information Envoke and Asulox/Asulam Programs

For ground application of Asulox/Asulam or Envoke use a minimum of 15 gallons of water per acre on a broadcast basis. Higher spray volume should be used for heavy weed infestations to ensure adequate spray coverage. Coverage of large johnsongrass foliage can be increased when nozzles are mounted on drops and spray is directed into the canopy. Average air temperature should be at least 60°F with johnsongrass 12 to 18 inches tall and actively growing when herbicide is applied. Do not cultivate, fertilize, or otherwise disturb the johnsongrass root system 7 days before or after herbicide application. With some variation caused by weather conditions, johnsongrass will be at the recommended treatment size in late March or early April. Asulox/Asulam may be applied by air but Envoke can not be applied aerially.

Dr. Jim Griffin is with the LSU AgCenter in the Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management and has research and extension responsibilities in the area of sugarcane weed management. Results from sugarcane weed control research and specific sugarcane weed control recommendations can be viewed at www.lsuagcenter.com/weedscience.

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1st Place District Acreage Winner
Northern District Category II

Parish Winner - Pointe Coupee

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent; Ricky Rivet; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Martin & Poche, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 2nd Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner
River/Bayou Lafourche District
Category III

Parish Winner - St. James

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Keith Martin; Chad LeBlanc and Jimmy Garret, St. James County Agent

Glynn Rivet

Top 20 Producer - 3rd Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner
River/Bayou Lafourche District
Category IV

Parish Winner - Iberville

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Glynn Rivet; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Engemann Farms

Top 20 Producer - 4th Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner
Northern District Category III

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee Couny Agent; Mark and Curt Engemann; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge Couny Agent

Charles G. Landry & Sons, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 5th Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner
Northern District Category IV

Parish Winner - West Baton Rouge

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Charles Landry, Jr., and Charles Landry, Sr.; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Winsley St. Pierre & Sons

Top 20 Producer - 6th Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner
River/Bayou Lafourche District Category II

Parish Winner - St. John

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Ronnie and Reed St. Pierre Not in Photo: Ryan St. Pierre

LeBlanc Brothers

Top 20 Producer - 7th Place

2nd Place District Acreage
Winner Northern District
Category III

Robert, Tom, and Melvin LeBlanc and Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent

Hymel Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 8th Place

2nd Place District Acreage
Winner River/Bayou Lafourche
District Category III

Parish Winner - Lafourche

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Brian and Jerry Hymel; and Mike Hebert, Lafourche County Agent

Flint Langlois

Flint Langlois

Top 20 Producer -9th Place

2nd Place District Acreage
Winner Northern District
Category II

Blanchard Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 10th Place

2nd Place District Acreage Winner River/Bayou Lafourche District Category II

Parish Winner - Assumption

Meinrad Blanchared; Miguel Llamas and Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent

Robert Morris

Top 20 Producer - 11th Place

Jimmy Landry; Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Melissa, Bobby, Dale and Robert Morris; and Harry Laws, Iberville County Agent

SJM Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 12th Place

Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent, Joe and Shane Michel

Landry Farms

Top 20 Producer - 13th Place

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Joel Landry; and Rick Louque, Assumption Count Agent

Thibodeaux Brothers, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 14th Place

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Corey, Troy, and Lance Thibodeaux; and Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent

Claiborne Plantation

Top 20 Producer - 15th Place

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; John Evans and Troy Mistretta; Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Boudreaux Enterprise
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Top 20 Producer
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Gilbert Blanchard

Top 20 Producer - 17th Place

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Trinity Farms, Inc

Top 20 Producer - 18th Place

Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent; Gary, Laurent, and Earl Gravois

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Top 20 Producer - 19th Place

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Perry Mire and Mike Hebert, Lafourche County Agent

Square B Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer - 20th Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner
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Joe, Edmond and Ted Broussard; and Jimmy Flannigan County Agent

Congratulations to the Top 20 Producers!
More High Yield Photos in the May Issue of The Sugar Bulletin

It's Spring and the Greenhouses are Full

By: Herman Waguespack, Jr.

Spring is a busy time at our research stations. The task at hand is to transplant 100,000's of new sugarcane seedlings and filling the greenhouses until the benches look like a carpet of green. Each year this activity marks the beginning of a 12-year long process of selecting, replanting, testing and evaluation of new sugarcane germplasm in search of the next commercial variety for the industry. Its no easy task for the Louisiana Sugarcane Variety Development Program, but this is where it all begins!

Dr. Kenneth Gravois reports that the LSU greenhouse at the St. Gabriel Sugar Station has a capacity to hold 110,080 seedlings. Right now it is full of seedlings. Approximately 200 different crosses are planted each year. Anywhere from 10 to 15 percent of the greenhouse is devoted to the cross appraisal test to identify the most promising crosses to plant to the field. This allows the breeders to drop the poorer crosses from selection and focus their attention on the better producing crosses. Once these young plants are placed in the greenhouse, they are normally grown for about six weeks before being planted into the fields sometime in April.

Dr. Tom Tew reports that the greenhouses at the USDA station have about 140,000 seedlings from 615 crosses planted. While the majority of the seedlings are devoted to the development of commercial varieties, about 20 percent of the seedlings are dedicated to the basic breeding program. This is an important part of the program that develops parent material to introduce wild genes into our commercial varieties for improved vigor and pest resistance. All of our current varieties trace back to this program. Additional studies for the development of borer resistant varieties and for self-stripping varieties are also planned for planting. Seedlings for the production of energy varieties are also included in this year's program.

Flats of seedlings with as many as 700 plants ready to be transplanted.

Newly transplanted seedlings - ready for the greenhouse

Seedlings grow quickly once they are in the greenhouse.

With daily watering and care they will soon be ready for the field. There are over 100,000 seedlings in this greenhouse.

The Importance of Sentinel Plots for Asian Soybean Rust

Blaine J. Viator, Ph.D.
Calvin Viator, Ph.D.

It is advisable that those planning to grow soybeans in their fallow fields consider planting sentinel plots to aid in early detection of the disease. What is a sentinel plot? It's simply two or three rows planted approximately three weeks prior to planting the remainder of your beans. These plots do not need to be large (as a colleague of mine said, the size of your living room). By strategically placing one or two of these sentinel plots near your soybeans, a trained agronomist may use these plots to determine if a fungicide program will need to be geared toward management of soybean rust.

Why are these plots so important? Well, the problem with this disease as that when you see the very earliest symptoms of the rust pustules on the lower leaves, it could possibly be too late to avoid significant yield losses. Once pustules begin to form, the disease explodes in fields in as little as 13 days following the initial infection. Additionally, the very earliest signs of soybean rust are difficult to distinguish from other soybean diseases such as bacterial pustule, cercospera, and others.

We do not yet know if soybean rust had over-wintered in Louisiana. There is the possibility that the cold winter may minimize the effects of the disease for the 2005 season. If sentinel plots are determined to have soybean rust in your area, soybeans will likely require a fungicide application at the R1 (first flowering) stage. If no rust is present, than one may opt to leave out the first fungicide application and only apply one fungicide treatment at our normal timing (pod formation) to control the late season diseases such as cercospera and aerial blight.

The importance of the sentinel plots is not only early detection of a difficult disease to scout, but it may save a producer one application of fungicide if rust is not an issue early-season in sentinel plots. It is for these reasons many of Louisiana's agricultural consultants and researchers are working diligently to get these sentinel plots planted.

If rain is hampering planting of these plots, one can use a simple garden "push planter" which is a hand-operated wheel device equipped with interchangeable plates and a hopper box to plant sentinel plots. If possible, plant the plots near tree lines or other semi-shaded areas where dew on leaves is prolonged. It is advisable to inform your consultant and your county agent exactly where these plots are located and the date planted so thorough scouting can be conducted.

Try the Classifieds in The Sugar Bulletin It Really Works!

Picking a Winning Race Horse, I Mean – Winning Sugar Cane

Bill White[1] and Jorge da Silva[2]

[1]USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research Laboratory, Houma, LA
[2]Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Weslaco, TX

Psst. Got a hoss here, he's the real deal. Guy I know - watched him work in the morning. My friend says this hoss has a butt the size of a refrigerator." It's important for a racehorse to have a big butt, but also strong straight legs, long pelvic bones and other associated characteristics. But even great horses usually lose more than they win so how do you know which horse to bet the farm on? As they say in horse racing: "My horse has won me a fortune. Unfortunately, I had a large one when I started…" (Wolff, 2003).

Sound similar to some of the challenges facing our industry? For a comparison example, how can you get into horse racing without looking too much like a chump? How can you stay in the variety development business without losing the farm? Part of the solution lies in efficiency and effectiveness in cane variety selection. One way to level the playing field against all the uncertainty in horse racing is equine biomechanics. One way to level the playing field against all the uncertainty in variety development is maker-assisted selection.

In 2001, the National Science Foundation awarded the second part of a half-million dollar grant for thoroughbred-related research – a mathematical model to predict the success of yearlings and weanlings. In 2003, the League's Dedicated Research Fund Committee awarded scientists from Texas A&M University and the USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research Laboratory the first of two grants to pursue marker-assisted selection to identify sugarcane varieties with resistance to the Mexican rice borer. Which by the way was nowhere near a half-million dollars. A progress report of this research is presented in this article.

First, what is marker-assisted selection and why should the Louisiana sugarcane industry be interested? Genetic markers allow the detection of differences in the genetic information of two or more individuals for a specific trait. A USDA scientist at Houma made the following analogy about markers. You see a nice house from the street, but you don't know if it is the right house to buy. It may look good from the outside, but what about the inside. You need a floor plan to know if the house contains the features that you want. Markers are like floor plans. They allow you to narrow your search of houses to only those that you know have what you are looking for thus, bringing efficiency and effectiveness to your house hunting. Markers do the same for the scientist doing variety development; they allow you to narrow your cane search to only those varieties that contain the features you want thus bringing efficiency and effectiveness to plant selection.

Markers assist in selection only when association is found between a trait of interest – in this case resistance to the Mexican rice borer – and a genetic marker. The advantage of such an approach results when there is a higher selection efficiency of the marker compared to the trait itself. Before the biotech-era, plant breeders used other kinds of markers to assist their selection. One example comes from corn breeding involving grain yield and length of tassel. Tassel length (a plant trait in this case) is known to be associated with the grain yield produced by the

plant: the shorter the tassel, the higher the grain yield tends to be. Because finding a short-tasseled plant is easier to select (it also suffers less from the effects of the environment) than a high yielding plant, corn breeders would base their selection on the tassel length, preferring those plants with shorter tassel over those with long tassels.

The same approach has been initiated for the selection of Mexican rice borer resistance. Historically, we count the number of bored joints to determine resistance. This is a timely procedure and only a few hundred clones can be tested in a year. Thereby reducing our prospects of finding a high yielding variety that is also resistant to the borer. This is one of the main reasons we started looking at the floor plan/genetic approach.

With genetic markers, instead of a plant trait, such as bored joints, we are using genetic markers obtained by genetic technology. The genetic technology that we used is called microsatellite markers. Microsatellite markers can be for random groups of genes or for genes that are known to produce a product. The microsatellite markers that we used were associated with 30 known genes shown to be the coding for disease and insect resistance. We believed that looking at markers associated with genes known to code for insect resistance would increase our chances of successfully finding a useful genetic marker for resistance to the Mexican rice borer in sugarcane.

Before we could successfully use these 30 microsatellites, we first had to determine if these genetic markers were actually associated with borer resistance in sugarcane. A marker is only valuable if it is closely related to the trait of interest, such as borer resistance. To begin, we first needed a population of sugarcanes that we could apply this technology to. This population should contain individuals that represent a range from borer susceptible to borer resistant. We began by planting such a field trial in September 2003 with Louisiana, Texas and Florida varieties at a commercial sugarcane farm near Weslaco, Texas (Table 1). Field plots were one row by 20-feet long and replicated 5 times. The response of a few of these varieties to Mexican rice borer was known, but for most, it was not known how they would respond to Mexican rice borer. However, several varieties came out of the on going recurrent selection for sugarcane borer resistance program at Houma with the assumption of their having cross-resistance to the Mexican rice borer. DNA was extracted from leaf rolls of each variety and microsatellite analyses were performed. At the same time damage levels of both Mexican rice borer and sugarcane borer were obtained by counting the numbers of deadhearts for each variety under natural infestations in the field. Both the Mexican rice borer and the sugarcane borer were present in the field; therefore we were not able to differentiate between the two species.

A database search identified 30 microsatellite markers previously developed from sugarcane disease and insect resistance genes. We obtained access to these markers.Encouragingly, one of them showed a possible association with stemborer susceptibility as measured by numbers of deadhearts. Unfortunately, the strength of the association between this identified marker and borer resistance was not sufficient (2 in 10 chance) to begin using the marker as a replacement for the screening of borer resistance in the breeding programs at Weslaco and Houma.

The fact that borer pressure was light and overall deadhearting by both borers was minimal may be the reason for the weak association between the genetic marker and levels of resistance. The low level of insect pressure was also reflected in our bored joint counts. This first year's results highlight the challenges that exists when embarking on a project of this nature. Obtaining sufficient insect pressure, different mechanism of resistance (i.e. resistance to deadhearting versus resistance to stalk boring), and differences in insect behavior all contribute to the complexity of the task. We are confident however, that these challenges can be overcome.

Table 1. Previously determined borer rating, reaction to a natural borer infestation, and presence of absence of marker for susceptibility for twenty-four sugarcane varieties. Runn Farm, Progresso, TX, 2003.

Variety	Borer Reaction[1]	# DH[2]	% BJ[3]	Marker[4]	Variety	Borer Reaction[1]	# DH[2]	% BJ[3]	Marker[4]
TCP87-3388	MRB S	17	3	–	Ho 95-988	MRB/SCB S	5	4	+
TCP89-3505	Not known	1	1	–	US 90-18[5]	SCB R	11	3	–
TCP93-4245	MRB S	6	6	–	US 93-15[5]	SCB R	1	1	–
CP 70-321	MRB/SCB R	2	4	–	US 93-17[5]	SCB R	5	2	+
CP 72-1210	Not known	2	3	–	US 99-2[5]	SCB R	1	4	–
L 97-128	SCB S	59	7	+	US 01-39[5]	SCB R	3	1	–
LCP 85-384	MRB/SCB S	7	4	–	US 01-40[5]	SCB R	5	1	–
HoCP85-845	MRB/SCB R	13	4	+	US 02-95[5]	SCB R	24	3	?
HoCP91-555	MRB/SCB S	5	6	+	US 02-96[5]	SCB R	21	1	+
HoCP93-776	SCB R	1	1	+	US 02-97[5]	SCB R	31	3	+
HoCP96-540	MRB/SCB S	2	3	–	US 02-98[5]	SCB R	7	1	–
HoCP00-960	SCB R	1	4	–	US 02-99[5]	SCB R	25	5	+

[1]Mexican rice borer (MRB), sugarcane borer (SCB), susceptible (S), and resistant (R).
[2]Average number of deadhearts (DH) caused by both MRB and SCB.
[3]Average percent bored joints (BJ) caused by both MRB and SCB.
[4] + = Marker for susceptibility present; – = Marker for susceptibility absent.
[5]Selections derived from the SCB resistance recurrent selection program at Houma.

The research project is now going into its second year and we expanded our effort by utilizing another type of molecular marker – AFLP. This genetic technology is different from the microsattelite marker approach that we began with as we will not be looking at known genes, but will be looking at random sequences of genes. This technology was chosen because the equipment recently purchased for the Weslaco, TX laboratory permits us to increase the number of markers that we can process. The microsattelite procedure used in 2004 could be described as using a sniper's rifle to hit a target while the AFLP approach could be describe as using a machine gun. Unfortunately, we had only 30 bullets to use in 2004, but will have many more bullets to use in 2005. Another trial has been planted for applying this approach, this time involving a total of 80 breeding lines: 26 breeding lines from Louisiana, 4 from Florida and 50 from Texas. This new trial was planted this past fall at another location in Hidalgo County, one that promises to have higher natural infestations of both borers due to the test site's proximity to sweet corn. The greater number of varieties evaluated and the availability of additional marker technology provide another opportunity to find additional markers with possible stronger association to resistance to either one or both borers.

Finally, we plan to use the marker we found in 2004 to evaluate the progeny derived from two crosses involving resistant and susceptible varieties shown in Table 1. We are guardedly optimistic that by the end of 2005, the marker we identified in 2004 will be validated thus providing a tool that will increase our chances of picking the winning racehorse, we mean...

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The mission of the American Sugar Cane League is to sustain success through effective research, positive legislation, public relations/promotion, and education.

The Sugar Bulletin

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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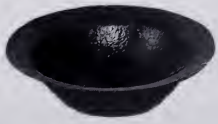

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

New Committee Assignments
Proportionate Share Review Committee
Alternative uses for Sugarcane
Promoting Sugar

I take this opportunity to thank those who have expressed an interest in becoming more involved in the major areas of work that the League is currently addressing. In recent committee meetings the participation we are receiving from our Louisiana producers and processors has been nothing short of outstanding. I encourage all who are interested in becoming more involved in the activities of our organization to let me or one of your directors know of your interest. The diversity of thought and experience that each of you possess is valuable and important to the overall wellbeing of the 210 year old Louisiana sugarcane industry.

Proportionate Share Review Committee

For quite some time many of you have expressed concern regarding the fashion in which Louisiana's sugarcane producers and processors receive their sugar marketing allotments from the United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency. This topic was brought up at a recent National Legislative Committee meeting, and it was decided that an Ad-hoc committee be established to address the issue. The committee, chaired by Charlie Schudmak, held its first meeting Friday, April 8. It was decided that a questionnaire be sent to our members requesting feedback. The committee plans to evaluate the responses and make a recommendation as to what other options may be available to improve Louisiana's current marketing allocation system for the betterment of our sugarcane industry.

Alternative uses for Sugarcane

With today's soaring oil and natural gas prices there is heightened interest in the use of sugarcane as a fuel source to help our country meet its ever increasing demand for energy. The League is involved in a number of initiatives to uncover the potential opportunities for this "New" market for Louisiana's sugarcane industry.

Our National Legislative Committee Chairman Jackie Theriot, for quite sometime, has been preaching that a three-legged approach is needed to sustain our industry in future years. Those three-legs are: first- sugar production, second- electricity production from co-generation, and third- ethanol production. Under the direction of our President Craig Caillier, the League is aggressively involved in studying the potential of co-generation and ethanol production.

Promoting Sugar

We are very pleased with the Sugar Association and the numerous efforts currently underway to defend and promote our product. A number of reports indicate that the low-carb fad diet craze has run its course and that the smart use of sugar in a well balanced diet is once again being well received. I encourage all of you to be proactive in selling the goodness of our "all natural" sugar. Defend your product and when someone asks you about the "Made from sugar so it tastes like sugar" imitation, tell them to log on to **www.TruthAboutSplenda.com** for details on this sugar imposter.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Ag Spending On Budget Table
Energy Bills Set To Move
CAFTA Pressures Building
USDA WASDE April Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The House and Senate returned to work in early April and began work on reconciling the vastly different budget agreements approved by both houses of Congress in March. As you may recall, the House budget target included $5.3 billion in mandatory agricultural spending cuts, while the Senate budget target includes $2.8 billion in ag spending cuts. The agricultural community is united in opposition to the higher House number and will seek to hold the line at the Senate number.

The Administration in mid-April backed away from its insistence that tighter payment limits be a part of the agricultural cuts, eliminating a significant obstacle to the budget talks, but the overall budget plans have significant differences that will be difficult to resolve in conference.

If an overall budget agreement is reached in conference, the authorizing committees will begin work on making program cuts to achieve the required savings. We have heard nothing to suggest that the agricultural committees are looking at taxing sugar producers by imposing marketing assessments on sugar loans to reduce the need for budget cuts.

Energy Bills Set To Move

The House Energy and Commerce Committee has essentially completed work on energy legislation and the Ways and Means Committee has a working draft of the tax provisions to be included in that package when it moves to the floor. The House package includes the MTBE liability protection language that the Senate vigorously opposed last year, but Energy and Commerce Chairman Joe Barton (R-TX) believes that he can reach a compromise with his Senate counterparts this time around.

The House energy bill will include a renewable fuels standard, probably in the 6 billion gallon range [current production capacity, including some 17 new plants that are nearing completion, is approximately 4.55 billion gallons]. While corn-based ethanol will be the major benefactor from this new target, there is reason to believe that such a high target will open up new opportunities for sucrose-based ethanol to have a role in supplying our nation's need for alternative energy sources. With some thirteen percent of US corn production now moving into ethanol production, and a like percentage covering demand for corn sweeteners, the growth in corn-ethanol production may not be sustainable, particularly if the livestock industry begins to feel the effect of an ever-tighter feed supply. In addition, there are geographic barriers to a corn-based ethanol supply line that could be an opportunity for a sucrose-based ethanol

industry located near the oil and gas facilities in southern Louisiana.

CAFTA Pressures Building

Rep. William Jefferson (D-LA) disappointed his friends in the sugar industry by announcing his support for CAFTA in mid-April. Citing his need to vote for an agreement that has been promoted as helpful to the New Orleans port, Jefferson nonetheless stressed his continuing concern about the treatment of sugar in trade talks. Rep. Jefferson urged the Administration to work to ensure that sugar trade liberalization is a focus of the multilateral trade talks at the World Trade Organization, where real reform of the global market can be achieved, rather than negotiating our industry away in a series of bilateral and regional agreements.

Jack Roney of the American Sugar Alliance testified at a Senate Finance Committee hearing on CAFTA in early April amid signs that the Administration was ready to ramp up the pressure on Members of Congress to pass the trade agreement. Roney informed the Committee of the very real dangers that CAFTA and the other bilateral and regional trade agreements present to our industry and stressed that the right way to achieve global sugar trade liberalization was at the World Trade Organization talks.

The Senators, many from beet states, involved in the Senate hearing were overwhelmingly critical of CAFTA, and of the Administration's handling of the sugar issues, with the lone exception of Chairman Chuck Grassley. On the same day, the House Committee on International Relations held a hearing that highlighted the human rights and labor problems plaguing the Central American region.

Recent comments from the Administration suggest that the White House is ready to begin ramping up the pressures on Members of Congress to pass the CAFTA early this summer, despite the numerous contentious issues currently under consideration. With Social Security reform at the top of the White House wish list, and with a host of other issues (energy reform, tax cut permanence, budget reconciliation, et al) currently occupying so much time and energy, it is difficult to predict when CAFTA-implementing language will move to Capitol Hill.

USDA WASDE April Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its April World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2004/05 beginning stocks are unchanged at 1,897,000 short tons (raw value). Total production was lowered to 8,053,000 short tons from 8,117,000 tons, with beet production dropping to 4,685,000 from 4,727,000 and cane production lowered to 3,368,000 from 3,390,000 last month. Louisiana's production was unchanged at 1,260,000. Imports were unchanged, pulling total supply down to 11,589,000 tons from 11,653,000 tons last month. Exports and deliveries were unchanged. As a result, ending stocks were reduced to 1,409,000 from 1,473,000 short tons last month. The stocks-to-use ratio fell to 13.8 percent from 14.5 percent last month.

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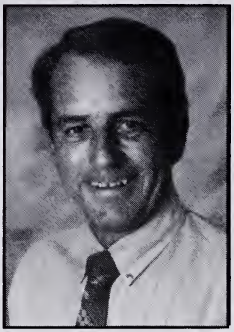

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report - Poor Plant Cane Stands Red Rot and The Breeding Program Acreage Reporting

At the writing of this article on April 15, 2005, fieldwork is progressing at a rapid pace. Despite a large number of windy days, growers have completed their herbicide applications. The winds, sunshine, and low humidity have combined to quickly dry the soils of the cane belt and growers have been able to take advantage of the drying field conditions. Most fields have had at least one cultivation, with a few fields that were badly rutted during harvest, receiving two and three if needed. With last year's short crop and the high cost of fuel, the total number of cultivations will be reduced greatly this year. In plant cane fields in which the rows have not washed too badly and stubble fields that were not rutted during harvest and where there are no weed problems, in a cost saving effort, growers are expecting to pass a very limited number of times before parking their cultivating tractors as quickly as possible. Many growers are expecting to reduce expenses of maintaining fallow ground through the use of a chemical fallow program and/or by planting roundup-ready soybeans.

Poor Plant Cane Stands

The daytime temperatures are now reaching the mid to upper seventies, however most night readings are below sixty degrees. Because of the cool nights, most growers are reporting shorter than expected heights in all ages of cane. Stands of cane range from very good in some of the fields of plant cane and older stubble; to fields of stubble cane that were to be kept that must now be plowed. Dr. Jeff Hoy, LSU AgCenter Sugarcane Pathologist; Mr. Jimmy Flanigan, Iberia and St. Mary Parish County Agent; and this author toured sections of Iberia and St. Mary parishes looking at fields of weak plant cane. The inspection included fields of four growers in the Irish Bend – Franklin area, the Glencoe – Louisa area, and Patout – New Iberia area. For the four growers' farms that were visited, there was about 800 acres total of weak plant cane. The stands ranged from no shoots in the fall to about 60% of the stand that was there going into the winter. Poor stands were observed in fields that were planted with billets and whole-stalk seed cane. According to the growers visited, about half of their 800 acres of weak plant cane will be plowed. The total amount of poor plant cane stands in the industry is unknown at this time. With the warm days, cane starting to grow above the winter kill back, and as growers make additional passes through their fields, more reports of weak plant cane stands are expected.

Poor stands were observed in fields of light, mixed, and heavy soils, planted with machines and by hand. There appeared to be no pattern other than they (the fields) all went through a six to seven week period after planting without a significant rain. When the seed cane was split open, it was full of red rot from one end to the other. Dr. Hoy has research data that indicates that red rot moves through a seed piece much faster when germinating under drought stress conditions than under normal or wet soil conditions. For 2004, many of LCP 85-384's

stalks were very small in diameter, which could have been an additional stress on the fledging shoots. With the additional stress of small diameter barrel, the stressed stalks did not have enough reserve energy to survive the numerous winterkills and the non-growth environmental conditions (cool temperatures) of March and April.

Red Rot and the Breeding Program

For a number of reasons, there has been little screening in the variety selection program for resistance to red rot; LCP 85-384 is very susceptible to the disease. Dr. Hoy, and Dr. Veremis, USDA-ARS, Sugarcane Laboratory, Houma, LA, are in the process of screening many of the wild lines of cane that are used for breeding in the basic program. Dr. Veremis is in charge of the basic breeding program at the Houma Station. Their initial research data suggests that red rot resistance is present in some of the wild lines. Because of the long selection process required to evaluate new varieties, it will require many years and many crosses before the resistance inherited from these wild canes can be incorporated into the commercial crossing program.

At a couple of locations visited last week there were some fields in which HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128 were planted at the same time as LCP 85-384. Although their stands were not exceptionally good, they were better than 384's, and will not be plowed out. In most cases growers were trying to get the maximum acres planted from the little seed available to them, therefore the seeding rate for the new varieties was much less than that of the 384. I do not mean to be a "gloomy Gus," and throw cold water on the possibility of resistance to red rot in the new varieties, but League Agronomist Herman Waguespack did report a number of fields of billet planted HoCP 96-540 in lower Lafourche parish in which the stands were very weak to no stand at all. These fields were on both heavy and light soil. These fields each had several rows of hand planted cane that were almost perfect next to billet planted cane that was very, very gappy.

Dr. Hoy has agreed to be on the program for the June 29th Contact Committee. The Committee has asked him to address the poor showing and decreasing vigor of LCP 85-384 during the past three crops. In other words, is the variety playing out?

Acreage Reporting

This is a reminder that included in the Sugar Section of the 2002 Farm Bill are rules that require the sugarcane growers of Louisiana to report their acreage to their local Farm Service Agency Office. In previous Farm Bills, sugarcane growers were not required to report their acreage and production. Under this new bill, there are sizeable fines for incorrect reporting of acreage. It does not matter if the incorrect report is for either acres that are fallow or in production. It is recommended that growers check with their FSA office and get an early start in reporting acreage. Do not forget to amend reported acreage by reporting any acres of plant cane that must be plowed due to the dry planting conditions. Ask your FSA office what forms should be filed. The final reporting date for sugarcane acreage is July 15th.

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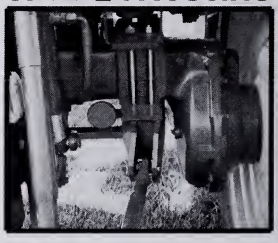

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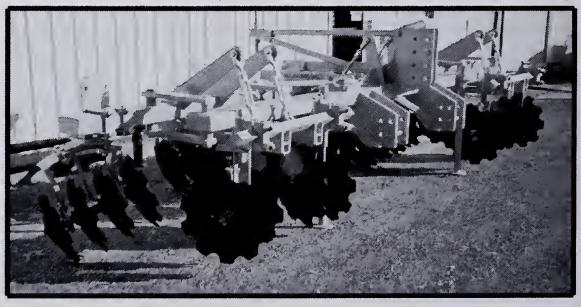

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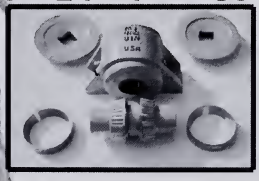

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MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

The Production of Ethanol in a Cane Sugar Mill

The high oil prices continue to keep us focused on alternative sources of fuel. Audubon Sugar Institute is expanding their DOE funded project on the conversion of sugarcane biomass to ethanol in a biorefinery. However, the commercialization of those efforts will probably take more than eight years.

The production of ethanol from sugars, either from molasses or from intermediate products in a sugar mill, is something that can be done right now. The Milling Around section in the September 2004 edition of the Bulletin outlined the economics of production of ethanol from molasses. The use of other intermediate products requires us to look at additional options which might be economically feasible.

Production of ethanol relies on having fermentable sugars, either sucrose or reducing sugars, and even some oligosaccharides. When we consider making sugar, the purity of the juice has a huge influence on recovery; in making ethanol, purity is irrelevant, and all that matters is the quantity of fermentable sugars. Fermentation is carried out at a Brix around 20, so that low Brix streams can be used to dilute molasses.

This may lead us to considering the following options as well:

1. Tops and leaves contain considerable quantities of fermentable sugars. We could consider separating them from cane, by pneumatic means, and expressing the juice from the leaves and tops to be used as an ethanol feedstock, before burning the residue in the boilers.
2. Add large amounts of imbibition water to the last mill(s) in the tandem, to extract more sugar from bagasse, and bleed some or all of this low Brix low purity juice to ethanol production (this was suggested by Neville Dolan).
3. Take filtrate, or even clarifier muds, to ethanol production and dispense with filters. The solid material has been sterilized in clarification and should not interfere with fermentation.
4. Take C sugar or B molasses for ethanol fermentation. A good proportion of the dextran in product sugar is recycled from C sugar. In times of market allocation quotas, if the cane is available, this could well be a profitable strategy.
5. If it is intended to use some of the sucrose in cane for ethanol production, we should consider breeding cane not for TRS but for TFS, i.e. total fermentable sugars.

These ideas are by no means exhaustive, and I am sure there are some other good options if we apply our minds to the problem.

One of the requirements for us to make some progress in the area is to improve our combined knowledge of the issues surrounding ethanol production, and our knowledge of the process of producing ethanol. This enables us to understand better the constraints and gives us a better idea of potential opportunities.

Audubon Sugar Institute has organized a short course for this purpose, Ethanol Production in a Cane Sugar Mill. It is a three-day course, from June 14 to 16, and will be given by one of Brazil's experts Jamie Finguerut. He has been intimately involved with all the developments in Brazil, and this promises to be a useful and interesting course.

Most efforts in the U.S. have been focused on production of ethanol from corn. This is an opportunity to focus on production of ethanol from sugarcane. If you need more information on the course and registration, go to our website at www.lsuagcenter.com/audubon, or contact Melati Tessier at mtessier@agctr.lsu.edu. I am sure this course will be a boost to efforts to produce ethanol as another viable product from the sugarcane crop.

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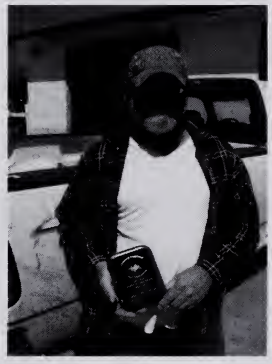

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Jim Simon

Call To Action
Sugar News
Bulletin Changes
Proportionate Share Survey

The administration in Washington has begun to maneuver players into position for a potential upcoming vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. As the pressure on the Louisiana delegation intensifies it is imperative that we maintain close contact with our Congressmen and Senators. Our elected officials need to hear from us often and in loud voices that we support them as they stand with us in opposition to this lop sided trade agreement. Congressmen Melancon, Boustany, Jindal, Baker and Alexander as well as Senators Landrieu and Vitter are with us in our opposition to the CAFTA. Congressmen Jefferson and McCrery have publicly stated their support for the agreement.

As reported in the May 4, 2005 issue of DYERGRAM, according to a recent Global Trade Watch survey, 50% of American voters say that they generally favor trade agreements, but only 32% are in favor of CAFTA. The poll also indicates that Americans regard this accord as a warmed over version of NAFTA.

Sugar News

To keep you informed on current events affecting our industry, we have developed *"Sugar News." "Sugar News"* will be delivered periodically via e-mail to our members and friends. This new service will include news stories and other writings that are of interest to the Louisiana sugar industry. Additionally, we will use this medium to circulate urgent information to you. If you know of friends who might be interested in receiving this e-newsletter, please provide us with their e-mail address and we will include them in our distribution.

Bulletin Changes

In the near future you will see a new and improved front and rear cover to our Sugar Bulletin. These minor changes will provide a more attractive publication while at the same time allowing us to be more efficient in its production and distribution. Let us know what you think about this new look. Your thoughts, comments, and suggestions on ways that we can improve the bulletin are always welcome.

Proportionate Share Survey

As mentioned in last month's bulletin, all of our producers and processors should have received a member survey asking for input regarding the current proportionate share system, which USDA uses to manage Louisiana's sugar marketing allotments. If you have not already done so, please take the time to complete the survey and return it to the League office. The Proportionate Share Review committee will be meeting again soon to review the survey results and we would like to have as many responses as possible.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Budget Cuts Ahead
Senate Energy Bills Up For Consideration
CAFTA
USDA WASDE May Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The House and Senate Agriculture Committees will be forced to cut $3 billion in mandatory program spending as a part of the budget agreement reached by House and Senate leadership. House Agriculture Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) met with commodity and producer groups in mid-May to brief us on the process ahead. According to the Chairman, the final cuts for all authorizing committees must be approved and sent to the Budget Committee in mid-September, where they will be packaged in a larger budget reconciliation package. The Chairman said that the committee will consider all programs within its jurisdiction, including farm programs, research, conservation, nutrition and rural development, and that the goal would be to make cuts in a way that preserves the 2002 farm bill parameters and sets the stage for the next farm bill.

While no decisions have been made on what programs will bear the brunt of the cuts, the agricultural committees are not likely to include a tax on sugar producers, such as the marketing assessments on sugar loans included in the President's budget. However, the appropriations committees will also be forced to find savings in discretionary program spending and may attempt to raid mandatory spending accounts to reach their savings goal. As the appropriations bills have been the focus of most of the attacks on the sugar program in recent years, we will follow this process closely in the coming months.

Senate Energy Bills Up For Consideration

The Senate is expected to begin marking up an energy bill in the latter half of May. Two competing bills will be considered. Senator Dick Lugar's (R-IN) bill would set a renewable fuels standard of 8 billion gallons by 2012, while Senator John Thune's (R-SD) bill would set that standard at 6 billion gallons. Current and pending ethanol facilities have a capacity of slightly under 4 billion gallons, according to industry data.

As you know, our own industry is very much interested in developing a sucrose ethanol alternative and the higher fuels standard could potentially facilitate the growth of this important new market for sugar products and by-products.

CAFTA

The Presidents of the CAFTA countries (Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador) visited several US cities and the White House in early May in an effort to drum up support for the trade agreement, but were met by protestors at several stops along the way. The New Democrats, a group that is generally supportive of free trade,

came out in opposition to CAFTA because of concerns about the labor and environmental provisions, or lack thereof, removing one major bloc of votes from the Administration's wish list, while several GOP Members of Congress reiterated their opposition. The GOP leadership will use the next few weeks to attempt to build support for the agreement, but a vote is unlikely to occur until late June or July.

USDA WASDE May Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its May World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. 2004/05 beginning stocks are unchanged at 1,897,000 short tons (raw value). Total production was raised to 8,067,000 short tons from 8,053,000 short tons last month, with beet production rising to 4,693,000 from 4,685,000 and cane production rising to 3,374,000 from 3,368,000 last month. Louisiana's production was up 3,000 at 1,263,000. Imports were unchanged, resulting in an increase in total supply to 11,603,000 from 11,589,000 tons last month. Exports were unchanged, deliveries were significantly higher at 10,020,000 from 9,980,000 last month. As a result, ending stocks were reduced to 1,343,000 tons from 1,409,000 last month. The stocks-to-use ratio fell to 13.1 percent from 13.8 percent last month.

The 2005/06 projections begin with the lower beginning stocks number and show total production of 8,140,000, with beet production at 4,370,000 and cane production at 3,770,000 tons. Louisiana production is projected to be 1,400,000 tons. Imports were pegged at 1,591,000 tons, including TRQ imports of only 1,206,000, bringing total supply to 11,074,000 tons. Exports were projected at 200,000, deliveries at 10,115,000 tons and use at 10,315,000, lowering ending stocks to 759,000 and resulting in a stocks-to-use ratio of 7.4 percent.

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This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product label(s) at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations. Always wear proper protective equipment.

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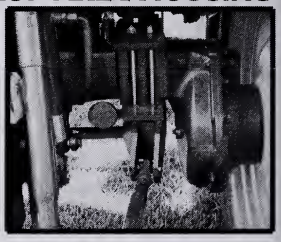

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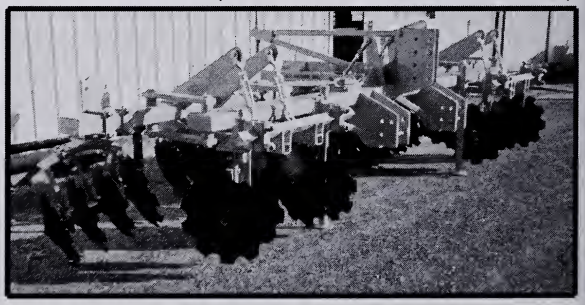

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report
Contact Committee Meeting
American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists
Sugarcane Meeting and Field Days for 2005

At the writing of this article on May 14, 2005, the industry is receiving the type of weather needed. For the previous two weeks or so, the night temperatures have remained above the sixty-degree mark and throughout the cane belt there have been only a few widely scattered rain showers. Most cane growers will agree that if the month of May is warm and dry, the number of cane shoots that survive and make millable stalks for harvest is greatly increased.

As the result of the dry field conditions and warming night temperatures, populations in plant cane fields have improved greatly. The improvement in plant cane has occurred in all fields, with the exception of those fields in which stands were so poor that they should have been plowed, but were kept for hope. Many growers are now faced with the decision of whether or not to make a larger than normal planting. The increasing high percentage of second and older stubble fields throughout the industry is one of the reasons sited for the declining yield of the previous years' crops. There is even some talk of not planting by a few growers who were financially ravaged by the low yields of 2004. The quickest way to decrease production cost per acre is to increase tonnage, and this cannot be done with fifty percent of the state's acreage in second stubble or older cane. **To remain profitable growers must plant a larger percentage of their acreage to replace fields of low yielding old-stubble!**

Despite a weedy start to this crop, growers now have most weed problems under control. Most all winter weeds have all but disappeared and even with cool and dry weather, applications of Asulox have worked very well. The application of Asulox was very timely with most fields sprayed before the johnsongrass started to head out. For this crop as in previous crops the Bermuda grass is off and running leaving many growers wondering if there is any control program that works on this yield decreasing grass. In a number of fields where a highboy is available, the post directed application of gramoxone applied under the canopy after the middles have been shaded offers some control (reduced growth) of Bermuda grass.

Contact Committee Meeting

As mentioned in last month's article, the date for this year's Contact Committee Meeting has been set for June 29, 2005. The venue for the meeting is the Envie Banquet Facility of the Howard Johnson in Thibodaux, LA. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. and should conclude around noon.

Topics covered will include a report on promising new varieties that are in the testing program and the amount of seed available for distribution of 95-988 from the ASCL secondary stations. The League's agronomist Mr. Herman Waguespack, Jr. will cover these topics. With the low yields of the 2003 and 2004 crops and with 90% + of the state's acreage in LCP 85-384, there have been many discussions among industry members as to whether or not the yielding ability of LCP 85-384 is starting to

decline. Dr. Jeff Hoy, LSU AgCenter, will address this topic, and will give a brief report on the results of the 2004 billet plantings. The Mexican Rice Borer continues its northeast movement and is approaching the Texas/Louisiana Stateline. Solutions to many industry pest problems (disease/insect) have been overcome by the breeding program. Dr. William "Bill" White, USDA-ARS, will discuss efforts that are going into the breeding program to increase the frequency of sugarcane borer/Mexican rice borer resistance in the varieties that are released to the Louisiana cane industry.

The impact of cane harvesting groups in Louisiana will be discussed by both Dr. Mike Salassi, LSU AgCenter, and by a representative of the Lake Charles Cane Coop. The discussion will present information obtained by the Coop from its experiences during previous harvest seasons, with Dr. Salassi presenting the results of his survey on the potential economic impact of group harvesting in Louisiana. Dr. Ryan Viator, USDA-ARS, will give an update on the continuation of harvester/cane quality research from 2003 and 2004. He has also agreed to present information from 2004/2005 on the interaction of the lack of mulch removal and the application of ripener. Additional ripener information will be presented by Dr. Benjamin "Ben" Legendre, LSU AgCenter, who will discuss the results of his 2004 ripener studies, the potential losses from the use of ripener, and the outlook for new ripeners.

The meeting will conclude with a presentation by Mr. Andy Briscoe, who is with the Sugar Association. He will present information on the efforts to improve the image of sugar, educate consumers to the true facts about sugar, and to increase sugar's share of the sweetener market.

In a cost cutting effort, there will be **no meal** served following the conclusion of the Contact Committee Meeting, however all are invited to attend the regular monthly meeting of the American Sugar Cane League Board, which is scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists

Members of ASSCT are reminded that the 35th Annual Joint Meeting of the Florida and Louisiana Divisions of the ASSCT will be held June 22-24, 2005 at the Marriott Bay Point Resort, Panama City Beach, FL. During the two day meeting, there will be a number of papers presented that should be of interest to both the processors and producers of Louisiana. More information (hotel reservation forms and tentative program) can be found at the ASSCT web site, which is www.assct.org, or by contacting Dr. Denver Loupe by phone at the LSU AgCenter, (225) 578-6930.

Sugarcane Meeting and Field Days for 2005

A presentation at a field day is the best method by which a researcher can transfer the technical information he has obtained from his research to growers. Because of the need to maximize production and lessen costs, all growers should make an attempt to attend the field day scheduled for his parish or one of the neighboring parishes' field day. **Additionally, the opportunity for smoke management recertification will be offered at most sugarcane field days.**

Thanks are given to Dr. Ben Legendre for preparing the following list of upcoming meeting dates. Dr. Legendre also mentioned that the times listed for field days are for the actual start time of the function itself. Registration generally begins at least one hour prior to the event.

Date and Time	Event
June 3 – 9:00 AM	Terrebonne Parish Area Sugarcane Field Day Ardoyne Farm, Chacahoula, LA
June 6 – 16	Raw Cane Sugar Manufacturers' Institute Department of Agriculture and Division of Continuing Education, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA
June 22 - 24	35th Annual Joint Meeting of the American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists (ASSCT), Louisiana & Florida Divisions Marriott Bay Point, Panama City, FL

June 29 – 9:00 AM ASCL Contact Committee Meeting
Howard Johnson Inn, Thibodaux, LA

July 9 – 8:00 AM Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation Convention
Commodity Conferences - Sugar
New Orleans Marriott Hotel
New Orleans, LA

July 19 – 3:00 PM Vermilion Parish Sugarcane Summer School
Cecil (Tentative)
McCrory Exhibit Bldg., Abbeville, LA

July 20 - 9:00 AM LSU Area Sugarcane Field Day
[Iberville, Pointe Coupee, St. Charles (Host), St. John, West Baton Rouge]
St. Gabriel Research Station,
St. Gabriel, LA

July 21 – 8:30 AM Lafourche Parish Sugarcane Field Day
American Legion Home, Raceland, LA

July 26 – 9:00 AM Assumption Parish Sugarcane Tour and Field Day
LCES Office
119 Robin Street , Napoleonville, LA

July 27 – 4:30 PM St. Mary Parish Sugarcane Field Day
Iberia Research Station
Jeanerette, LA

July 28 – 4:30 PM Iberia Parish Sugarcane Field Day
M.A. Patout & Sons
Patoutville, LA

July 29 - 2:00 PM St. Martin/Lafayette/St. Landry Parishes Sugarcane Field Day
Levert-St. John
St. Martinville, LA

TBA Avoyelles/Rapides Parish Fall Practices Meeting,
Bunkie Civic Center
(Old Bunkie Bank Meeting Room)
Bunkie, LA

TBA Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Training
Sugar Station Conference Room
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(For new producers and those producers who failed to re-certify)

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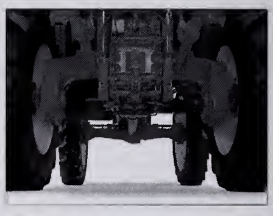

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Federal Legislative Stalemate

The need to fix the many defects in existing Federal environmental law continues, but nothing constructive is currently being accomplished in Congress. President Bush pushed his "Clean Skies" initiative via proposed amendments of the Clean Air Act, but in spite of including many if not most of the measures desired by environmentalists including a 70 percent reduction in mercury emission over the next 13 years and major reductions in nitrogen and sulfur oxides emissions, the amendments were derailed by a tie vote in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. One excuse given for the negative votes was that the bill did not address carbon dioxide emissions, which emissions environmentalists and pseudo-scientists allege to be the cause of "global warming."

Strangely, the Senate rejected nearly unanimously any treaty on carbon dioxide reduction under the "Kyoto Accord," as agreed to by the then Vice President Al Gore, and it is very unlikely that any stand-alone bill on mandatory carbon dioxide emission reductions could ever pass Congress. A more likely reason for the negative votes in committee is that the coal fired electric power industry had (reluctantly) agreed to support the Bush initiative, and environmentalist senators are not about to give industrialists of any stripe or President Bush credit of any kind for improving the environment.

The really ironic thing about the Senate thwarting President Bush's Clean Skies legislation is that virtually all of the emission curtailments in the Clean Skies initiative are now to be achieved by the Bush Administration revisions to Clean Air Act Regulations, but time deadlines for compliance allowed to industry, particularly coal-fired power plants, will be extended, easing somewhat the financial burden on industry. The downside is that legislative fixing of the New Source Review (NSR) problem and other environmental injustices will not be accomplished. However, as time goes by, and the environmental/legal mischief making of the Clinton Administration EPA fades into oblivion, the coal-fired power plants which were the primary target of the Clinton Administration misapplication of NSR rules enforcement are being replaced or upgraded to higher standards, and thus Clinton Administration perceived NSR maintenance issues are generally no longer "enforceable" in the high profile electric power industry. It also becomes very unlikely that troublemaking NSR maintenance issues will ever be applied to the "small potatoes" cane sugar industry.

It should also be pointed out that the Clean Skies emissions reductions called for in the new regulations will have no direct impact on the cane sugar industry, but will have an indirect impact by creating higher value to the energy generated

by low sulfur dioxide-low nitrogen dioxide-low mercury emitting bagasse boilers.

Another urgent environmental issue bogged down in the Senate is the Energy Bill. Nearly everyone agrees that something must be done pronto to avert catastrophe, and the House has already passed an updated and comprehensive energy bill, but nothing constructive seem to be happening in the Senate. Environmental issues such as MTBE liability, oil well drilling in environmentalist sacrosanct areas, and exploiting abundant domestic coal resources are given as excuses to thwart progress in the Senate. Prolonged bickering and threatened filibustering over approval of nominees to the judiciary cannot possibly help the situation. There is hope that an energy bill will promote and/or subsidize use of bio-fuels such as bagasse and alcohol, but who could afford to invest a penny there until a profitable market is definitely available.

While it is possible that market forces alone could eventually solve this nation's energy problem, it may take too long to get the necessary facilities in place. For instance, it now takes 12 to 15 years from the go-ahead to get a nuclear power plant on-line. Furthermore, the environmentalists might not be pleased with the evolution. This nation has virtually unlimited coal resources, and with current clean-coal technology, coal utilization could increase greatly from the present 23 percent of total U.S. energy supply. Environmentalists don't like coal or nuclear energy.

There is no assurance that a disastrous international energy crisis is not near at hand. It would be far better for a comprehensive national energy plan to be in place now rather than to depend entirely on market forces to steer this nation through a crisis. Let us hope that the Senate can get down to serious business before it's too late.

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THE 2004 LOUISIANA SUGARCANE VARIETY SURVEY

Benjamin L. Legendre and Kenneth A. Gravois
LSU AgCenter, St. Gabriel Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA 70776

A sugarcane variety survey was conducted during the summer of 2004 by the county agents in the 24 sugarcane-growing parishes of Louisiana to determine the variety makeup and distribution across the industry in the state. The information presented in this report was summarized from those individual parish surveys.

Agents in each sugarcane-producing parish collected acreage figures by variety and crop from producers in their respective parishes. Seven varieties, CP 70-321, LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845, HoCP 91-555, Ho 95-988, HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128, were listed along with "Others" in the survey. The category of others included, but was not limited to, small acreages of CP 65-357, CP 72-370, LCP 82-89 and LHo 83-153. The crop was divided into four categories, which included plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble and third-stubble and older crops. Additional information was collected as needed from the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices regarding acres of sugarcane grown in the parishes.

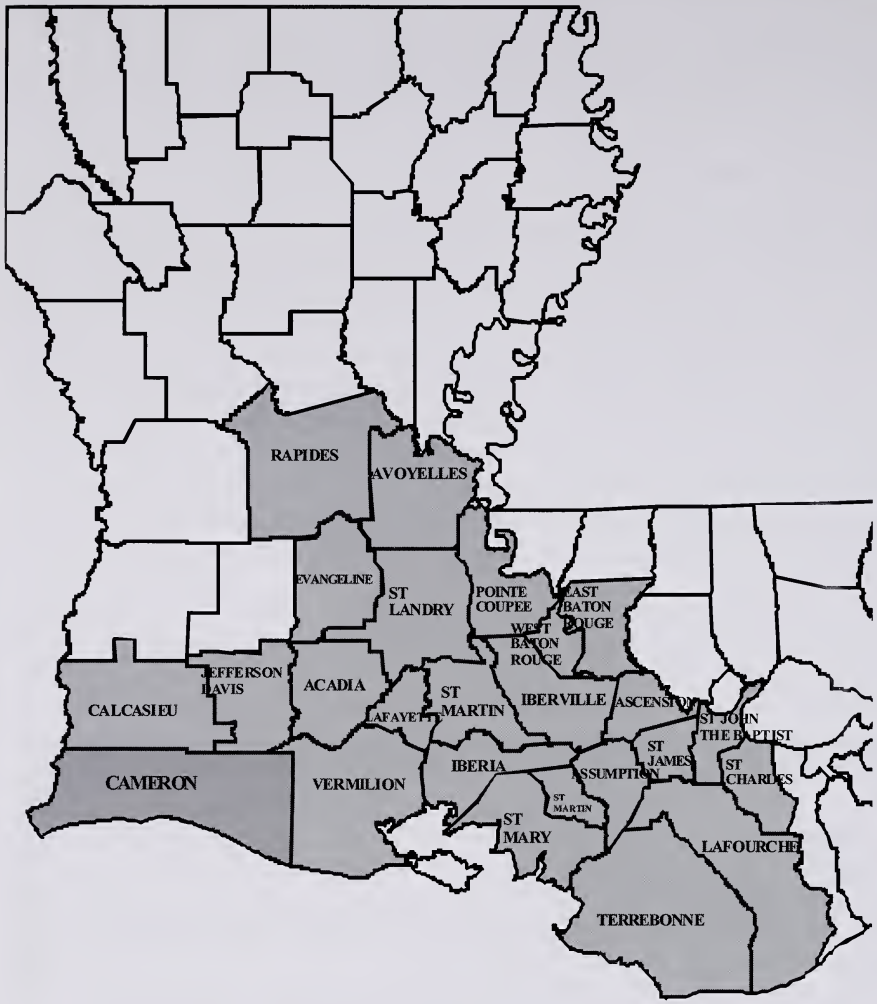
Actual acreages covered by this survey for each parish, region and the statewide total are shown in Table 1. Statewide, the area planted to sugarcane reported in this survey was 458,660 acres. This is over 99% of the total acres (461,739) reported by FSA in the Louisiana Agricultural Summary for 2004 (Anonymous 2004). They also reported that there was an additional 598 acres classified as failed. Figure 1 shows the parishes where sugarcane is grown in the state. Total area planted to sugarcane for the three regions, Bayou Teche, River-Bayou Lafourche and Northern, and parishes (counties) are also shown in Table 1. The Bayou Teche region has the largest area planted to sugarcane, with 197,490 acres reported (43.1% of the total acreage), followed by the River-Bayou Lafourche region with 160,366 acres (35.0%) and the Northern area with 100,804 acres (21.9%). The total area planted to sugarcane in the state declined for the third consecutive year by approximately 4%. This is undoubtedly due to the threat of acreage reductions brought about by allotments and proportionate shares as written in the current Farm Bill.

Table 1. Total area planted to sugarcane in Louisiana by region and parish (county), 2004[1].

Bayou Teche region		River-Bayou Lafourche region		Northern region	
Parish	Acres	Parish	Acres	Parish	Acres
Acadia	3,527	Ascension	13,877	Avoyelles	20,741
Calcasieu	2,809	Assumption	40,900	East Baton Rouge	528
Cameron	38	Iberville	35,192	Evangeline	1,680
Iberia	59,192	Lafourche	29,383	Pointe Coupee	32,109
Jeff Davis	5,988	St. Charles	2,149	Rapides	12,715
Lafayette	15,459	St. James	24,588	St. Landry	17,803
St. Martin	33,000	St. John	4,344	West Baton Rouge	15,228
St. Mary	44,797	Terrebonne	9,933		
Vermilion	32,680				
Total	197,490	Total	160,366	Total	100,804
Total all regions: 458,660					

[1] Acreage based on information obtained in variety surveys from 24 parishes by the county agents in 2004.

Figure 1. Parishes (counties) in Louisiana where sugarcane is grown.



The estimated statewide sugarcane acreage in percent by variety and crop is shown in Table 2. The leading variety for 2004 was LCP 85-384, with 91% of the total acreage followed by HoCP 91-555, CP 70-321 and HoCP 85-845, with 4, 3 and 2% of the total acreage, respectively. These four varieties have been the only varieties recommended for commercial planting for the past several years (Legendre 2001). The three remaining varieties, Ho 95-988, HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128, included in the survey were released within the past two years and the area planted to these varieties is still relatively small. However, it is expected that these new varieties will claim more acres in the future years because the area planted to LCP 85-384 will undoubtedly begin to decline. However, LCP 85-384 continued to increase in popularity among producers in 2004. Over 90% of the area in plant-cane through the third-stubble crop was planted to LCP 85-384. LCP 85-384 was released for commercial planting in the fall of 1993. For the newly released varities, none occupied more than 1% of the total acreage in the current survey although HoCP 96-540, released in 2003, occupied 1% of the area in the plant-cane crop only.

Table 2. Estimated statewide sugarcane acreage percentage by variety and crop, all regions, 2004[1].

Variety	Plant-cane	First-stubble	Second-stubble	Third-stubble and older	Total
	%				
CP 70-321	1	1	2	2	2
LCP 85-384	91	91	89	91	91
HoCP 85-845	2	2	4	4	3
HoCP 91-555	4	5	4	2	4
Ho 95-988	<1	0	0	0	<1
HoCP 96-540	1	<1	0	0	<1
L 97-128	<1	0	0	0	<1
Other	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Total acres	125,214	117,876	111,454	104,116	458,660
Percent total crop (%)	27.3	25.7	24.3	22.7	

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys from 24 parishes by county agents in 2004.

Since the prominence of LCP 85-384, there has been a trend to plant less cane each year and keep more acres in older stubble crops; however, that trend was modified for 2004 when more acres were planted in all regions than had been seen in previous years (Table 3). This was undoubtedly because of the poorer than anticipated stubble yields following 2002 when the industry was forced to harvest under less than ideal conditions for much of the crop following the passage of four tropical systems during the summer and early fall as well as the unprecedented rainfall that occurred throughout much of the harvest. This destroyed the stubble crops in many fields forcing producers to plant more acres in 2003. Further, the continued wet weather throughout the summer and fall of 2002 did not allow many producers to plant their full compliment of plant-cane which meant more cane had to be planted in 2003 for the 2004 harvest (Legendre and Gravois 2004). For the current survey, the Northern area had only 25.8% in third or older stubble; whereas, in 2003 it was 34.3%. On the other hand, the River-Bayou Lafourche region tends to plant more cane each year, with less of its area committed to stubble crops. However, because of the wet planting season in 2002, the River-Bayou Lafourche region had only 23.3% of its area in plant-cane in 2003. This necessitated that its producers plant more cane in 2003. The current survey shows that this region had 28.9% in plant-cane for 2004 and only 20.8% in third and older stubble. The Bayou Teche region had a near normal planting in 2002 (24.3% in plant-cane in 2003); however, there were some areas where the full compliment of cane was not planted, i.e. St. Mary Parish (Unpublished data).

LCP 85-384 was the preferred variety in all regions (Tables 4, 5 and 6). It was grown on 90% or more of the area in each of the three regions. The three remaining varieties, CP 70-321, HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 continued to loose favor by producers in all regions. However, it is anticipated that the area planted to LCP 85-384 will decrease in future years with the release of the three new

Table 3. Estimated sugarcane distribution by region and crop, 2004[1].

Crop	Bayou Teche	River-Bayou Lafourche	Northern	State Total
Plant-cane				
Area (acres)	52,335	46,346	26,209	125,214
Percent (%)	26.5	28.9	26.0	27.3
First-stubble				
Area (acres)	50,755	40,252	26,915	117,876
Percent (%)	25.7	25.1	26.7	25.7
Second-stubble				
Area (acres)	49,372	40,412	21,673	111,454
Percent (%)	25.0	25.0	21.5	24.3
Third-stubble and older				
Area (acres)	45,028	33,356	26,007	104,116
Percent (%)	22.8	20.8	25.8	22.7
Total acres	197,490	160,366	100,804	458,660

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys from 24 parishes by county agents in 2004.

Table 4. Estimated area planted to sugarcane in percent by variety and crop for the Bayou Teche region, 2004[1].

Variety	Plant-cane crop (%)	First-stubble crop (%)	Second-stubble crop (%)	Third-stubble crop & older (%)	Total (%)
CP 70-321	2	3	3	4	3
LCP 85-384	90	93	91	90	91
HoCP 85-845	1	1	2	4	2
HoCP 91-555	5	3	4	2	4
Ho 95-988	<1	0	0	0	<1
HoCP 96-540	2	<1	0	0	<1
L 97-128	<1	0	0	0	<1
Others	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys from 24 parishes by county agents in 2004.

Table 5. Estimated area planted to sugarcane in percent by variety and crop for the River/ Bayou Lafourche region, 2004[1].

Variety	Plant-cane crop (%)	First-stubble crop (%)	Second-stubble crop (%)	Third-stubble crop & older (%)	Total (%)
CP 70-321	<1	1	1	2	1
LCP 85-384	93	92	89	89	91
HoCP 85-845	3	3	6	7	4
HoCP 91-555	2	4	4	2	3
Ho 95-988	<1	0	0	0	<1
HoCP 96-540	2	<1	0	0	<1
L 97-128	<1	0	0	0	<1
Others	<1	<1	<1	1	1
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys from 24 parishes by county agents in 2004.

Table 6. Estimated area planted to sugarcane in percent by variety and crop for the Northern region, 2004[1].

Variety	Plant-cane crop (%)	First-stubble crop (%)	Second-stubble crop (%)	Third-stubble crop & older (%)	Total (%)
CP 70-321	1	1	2	1	1
LCP 85-384	90	87	86	96	90
HoCP 85-845	2	4	7	2	4
HoCP 91-555	6	8	5	1	5
Ho 95-988	<1	0	0	0	0
HoCP 96-540	1	<1	0	0	0
L 97-128	<1	0	0	0	0
Others	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Based on information obtained in variety surveys from 24 parishes by county agents in 2004.

varieties which have yield characteristics similar to LCP 85-384 and have shown at least moderate resistance to common rust. A series of field studies conducted by Hoy and Hollier in 2004 showed that common rust can cause significant loss of both tons of cane and sugar per acre in LCP 85-384 (Unpublished data).

No variety with the exception of LCP 85-384 showed an increase in the acreage in 2004 when compared to the previous year (Table 7) (Legendre & Gravois 2004). LCP 85-384 increased by 3%. All of the older varieties in the survey decreased in area from the previous year by 1 percentage point. CP 70-321 occupied 49% of the planted acreage as late as 1995; however, in the current survey it was grown on only 2% of the state's acreage. Only one other variety, CP 65-357, released in 1973, reached more than 70% of the total acreage with a high of 71% in 1980. LCP 85-384 occupied 20 percentage points more than CP 65-357 in 2004 when that variety was at its peak. LCP 85-384 is a high-yielding, excellent-stubbling variety; however, after lower cane yields experienced during the 2003 and 2004 crops, skeptics feel that the variety is in "decline." However, much of this decline was attributed to the greater than normal amount of third and older stubble as well as the residual effect of the horrendous harvest conditions in 2002 following the four tropical systems and record rainfall that fell during the harvest (Legendre and Gravois 2004). However, for the first time in 2004 it was documented that common rust can cause significant reductions in both cane tonnage and sugar per acre. Further, because of its tendency to lodge, more scrap is generally left in the field with this variety (Robert et al. 2004). Harvesting losses have also been documented because of its small sized stalks. When the speed of the extractor fan on the cane combine exceeds 700-900 rpm, there are more losses experienced through the extractor fan with LCP 85-384 due to its small stalk size (Legendre 2002).

It is anticipated that LCP 85-384 has reached its peak in popularity and that acreage in the variety will drop in coming years. The three new varieties have yield of sugar per acre equal to or exceeding that of LCP 85-384 (Robert et al. 2004). In addition to improved rust resistance, these varieties are more erect and better adapted to mechanical harvesting.

Over 90% of the Louisiana sugarcane crop is now harvested by combine to take advantage of the superior yielding ability of LCP 85-384; however, with the lower yields experienced in 2003 and

Table 7. Louisiana sugarcane variety trends, by variety and years, all regions, 2000-2004[1].

	Area planted to sugarcane by variety and years (%)					
Variety	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	1 yr. Change
CP 70-321	13	8	5	3	2	-1
LCP 85-384	71	78	85	88	91	+3
HoCP 85-845	8	7	6	4	3	-1
HoCP 91-555	<1	1	3	4	3	-1
Ho 95-988	0	0	0	0	<1	0
HoCP 96-540	0	0	0	<1	<1	0
L 97- 128	0	0	0	0	<1	0
Others	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	0
Totals	100	100	100	100	100	

[1] Based on annual variety surveys from 24 parishes by county agents, 2000-2004.

2004, many growers reverted back to the whole-stalk "soldier" system for harvesting their crops. Time will tell if this trend continues. From all the data collected thus far, it appears that Ho 95-988, HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128 are better suited to combine harvesting when compared to LCP 85-384, and some producers might switch to them to take advantage of this one characteristic so long as they are not sacrificing yield of sugar per acre.

Most sugarcane-producing areas of the world do not place a high dependence on a single variety, as is the case in Louisiana (Tew 1987). The need to avoid genetic vulnerability was seen in Cuba several years ago when its growers suffered substantial yield losses because of a rust epidemic and the heavy dependence on one variety, B 4362. As a result, guidelines were established in Cuba advising growers not to plant more than 30% of their area to B 4362, their leading commercial variety. A similar situation occurred recently in Australia with Q124 and susceptibility to orange rust. However, once a clearly superior variety is found, the inadvisability of becoming highly dependent on a single variety must be weighed against the increased profitability anticipated from the culture of only one variety. Occasionally expectations will outweigh potential risk considerations (Tew 1987). It is becoming more apparent that the time has now come for the Louisiana industry to consider a switch to other varieties since LCP 85-384 is now considered susceptible to common rust and significant reductions in yield of sugar per acre have been demonstrated.

Another disease was found in LCP 85-384 in recent years, sugarcane yellow leaf virus (Grisham et al. 2001); it appears that the variety is tolerant to this disease at least for the moment. However, it is entirely possible that this new virus is also taking its toll on yield of this variety. In a continuing effort to lessen the dependence of the industry on one variety, the Louisiana variety development program is constantly striving to develop other new, superior varieties that are as good as or better than LCP 85-384; however, the task has not been an easy one (Ken Gravois, personal communication).

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the assistance of the county agents for soliciting the sugarcane variety information published in this survey. We also want to thank the sugarcane producers who took the time and effort to respond to the survey from their agents.

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

A Report on the 2004 Outfield Variety Tests

Herman L. Waguespack, Jr., ASCL, Agronomist
Windell R. Jackson, ASCL, Senior Agronomist
Donnie D. Garrison, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Agronomist
Todd J. Robert, LSU AgCenter, Research Farm Specialist
Kenneth A. Gravois, LSU AgCenter, Professor

This report has been written to inform the Louisiana sugarcane industry of the agronomic performance of sugarcane varieties harvested in the outfield variety tests during 2004. Outfield variety tests are conducted during the final three years of the 12-year multistage Louisiana sugarcane variety improvement program.

These tests are planted, harvested, and evaluated cooperatively by the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and the American Sugar Cane League.

In 2004, 29 outfield tests were mechanically harvested at ten locations throughout the sugarcane belt (Table 1). These tests were on sugarcane farms with typical soils for that region. The planting and harvest date, as well as the soil type and region, for each outfield test location are also presented.

Yield data were obtained using single-row combine harvesters provided by growers at each test location and a three-ton, single-axle, high-dump weigh wagon equipped with electronic load cells to record cane weight. The experimental design at each location was a randomized complete block. The plots for plant-cane, first-stubble and second-stubble tests were two rows 50 feet long with a 5-foot alley between plots. The third-stubble tests plots were three rows 32 feet long with a 5-foot alley between plots. Each row was harvested by combine and loaded into the weigh wagon. Plot weights were used to calculate the yield of tons of cane per acre, and a 15 whole-stalk sample was cut from each plot prior to combine harvesting for a juice quality analysis. The 15-stalk sample was weighed to determine stalk weight and then crushed with a 3-roller mill. From this analysis, the yield of theoretical recoverable sugar per ton of cane was estimated from the Brix and sucrose obtained for each sample (3). The yield of sugar per acre (lbs/acre) is the product of tons of cane per acre and sugar per ton of cane. Additional reference information on the procedure used for data collection and preparation is given at the end of this report (1,2,5).

Yield data for the light soils and heavy soils were combined for data analysis (Table 2). Included in the table are data for four experimental and four commercial varieties at nine plant-cane tests, two experimental and five commercial varieties at eight first-stubble tests, five commercial varieties at nine second-stubble tests, and six commercial varieties at three third-stubble tests. The table includes data for sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, sugar per ton of cane, stalk weight and stalk population. Discussion in this report will focus primarily on sugar per acre. For convenience, the commercial variety used as a standard for comparison, LCP 85-384, is highlighted in the data table. Since 1998, this variety has occupied more acreage than any other commercial variety in Louisiana. In 2004, LCP 85-384 was planted on 91% of the sugarcane acreage (4).

The PROC MIXED procedure (SAS 9.0) was used to statistically analyze the data. Mean separation was accomplished using the PDIFF option where a probability level of < 0.05 was considered

Table 1. Planting and harvest dates, soil types and regions, for ten outfield locations during 2004.

Location	Plant-cane		First-stubble		Second-stubble		Third-stubble	
	Harvest	Planted	Harvest	Planted	Harvest	Planted	Harvest	Planted
	2004	2003	2004	2002	2004	2001	2004	2000
Light Soil								
Alma [3]	12/02	9/11	12/02	09/04	10/21	09/14	**	08/30
Bon Secour[1]	12/14	9/05	12/14	09/03	11/08	09/08	11/08	08/24
Georgia [1]	11/24	9/18	11/24	09/21	11/24	09/15	**	09/19
Glenwood [1]	11/18	8/27	11/04	08/29	11/04	09/25	**	08/23
Lanaux [1]	11/09	9/03	11/09	09/11	10/20	09/05	10/20	09/06
Levert- St. John[2]	11/15	8/26	10/25	09/11	10/25	09/19	**	09/01
R.Hebert [2]	11/19	9/12	11/19	09/18	11/19	09/27	**	09/05
Heavy Soil								
Allain [2]	**	*	**	*	10/27	09/19	10/27	09/27
Landry [1]	12/15	9/17	**	*	**	*	**	*
Magnolia [1]	10/29	10/09	10/29	08/16	10/29	10/04	**	10/04

* No test planted at this location.

** No test harvested at this location.

[1] Mississippi River/Bayou Lafourche region

[2] Bayou Teche region

[3] Northern region

significant. Varieties with statistically higher values than LCP 85-384 are indicated by a plus (+), and those with statistically lower values are indicated by a minus (-) next to each trait reported.

The experimental varieties in the outfield were L 99-226, L 99-233, L 00-266 and HoCP 00-950. L 99-226 and L 99-233 were harvested in plant-cane and first-stubble in 2004 and were both significantly better than LCP 85-384 in the yield of sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, and sugar per ton of cane on all soils. While L 99-226 had significantly heavier stalks, its stalk population was significantly less than LCP 85-384. L 99-233 had a significantly higher stalk population but had stalk weights that were not significantly from the check variety. L 00-266 and HoCP 00-950 were harvested in plant-cane only. L 00-266 was not significantly from LCP 85-384 in all yield parameters. HoCP 00-950 yielded significantly more sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, and sugar per ton of cane with significantly heavier stalks than LCP 85-384. Detailed yield comparisons are shown in Table 2.

L 97-128 and HoCP 96-540 were harvested in plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble, and third-stubble tests in 2004. L 97-128 yielded significantly more sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 in plant-cane, first-stubble and second-stubble across all soil types. It is early maturing and had statistically higher sugar per ton of cane in the plant-cane, first-stubble and third-stubble crops. The new variety also emerges quickly after planting and has vigorous early growth. L 97-128 is classified as resistant to mosaic, moderately resistant to leaf scald and rust, moderately susceptible to smut, and susceptible to the sugarcane borer. The variety is erect and harvests well. L 97-128 was selected from a cross of LCP 81-10 and LCP 85-384 and was released for commercial production in 2004.

Table 2. Combined analysis of outfield tests for plant-cane through third-stubble crops on light and heavy soil locations during 2004.

Variety	Sugar/A (lbs)	Tons/A (tons)	Sugar/T (lbs)	St. wt. (lbs)	Population (no./acre)
Plant-cane crop at nine locations					
LCP 85-384	**7200**	**26.6**	**272**	**1.86**	**29170**
HoCP 91-555	8588 +	29.8 +	287 +	2.09 +	29222
HoCP 96-540	9000 +	32.0 +	281	2.46 +	26440
L 97-128	8528 +	28.6	297 +	2.39 +	23889 -
L 99-226	9538 +	32.5 +	294 +	2.86 +	22973 -
L 99-233	8814 +	31.0 +	283 +	1.91	32955 +
L 00-266	7573	27.5	275	1.95	28776
HoCP 00-950	9490 +	31.0 +	307 +	2.13 +	29211
First-stubble crop at eight locations					
LCP 85-384	**6588**	**23.9**	**277**	**1.59**	**29916**
HoCP 85-845	6941	25.8	270	1.83 +	28019
HoCP 91-555	7598 +	26.3 +	288 +	1.77 +	29832
HoCP 96-540	7571 +	27.8 +	275	2.00 +	27590
L 97-128	7487 +	25.8	292 +	2.01 +	25637 -
L 99-226	8396 +	27.6 +	304 +	2.28 +	24196 -
L 99-233	7866 +	27.7 +	285	1.64	33973 +
Second-stubble crop at nine locations					
LCP 85-384	**6207**	**21.9**	**287**	**1.44**	**31050**
HoCP 85-845	6284	23.3	271 -	1.70 +	28219
HoCP 91-555	6061	21.7	283	1.55	28176
HoCP 96-540	6288	23.0	277 -	1.77 +	26229 -
L 97-128	7076 +	24.2	295	1.86 +	25918 -
Third-stubble crop at three locations					
CP 70-321	3484 -	13.7 -	256 -	1.59	18671 -
LCP 85-384	**5111**	**18.2**	**282**	**1.33**	**27446**
HoCP 85-845	5355	19.5	274	1.50	26211
HoCP 91-555	5920	20.7	289	1.47	28224
HoCP 96-540	6141 +	21.5 +	287	1.58	27617
L 97-128	5858	19.2	305 +	1.56	25002

(+) or (-) denotes yields that are statistically higher or lower than LCP 85-384, respectively.

In 2004, HoCP 96-540 yielded significantly more sugar per acre and tons of cane per acre than LCP 85-384 in plant-cane, first stubble and third stubble on all soils. HoCP 96-540 is classified as resistant to smut and mosaic, moderately resistant to rust and leaf scald and moderately susceptible to the sugarcane borer. Based on harvest observations, this variety tends to be more erect than LCP 85-384 and, even when lodged, appears to be better suited for combine harvesting. Selected from a cross of LCP 86-454 and LCP 85-384, HoCP 96-540 was released for commercial production in 2003.

HoCP 91-555 yielded significantly more sugar per acre, tons of cane per acre, sugar per ton of cane and stalk weight than LCP 85-384 in plant-cane and first-stubble on all soils. HoCP 85-845 had yields that were statistically equivalent to the check variety, but CP 70-321 yielded significantly lower than the standard variety in the third-stubble crop. Detailed yield comparisons are shown in Table 2.

Acknowledgments

Sincere appreciation is expressed to the growers who participate in the many different stages of the Louisiana sugarcane variety improvement program. The continued advancement of the Louisiana sugarcane industry depends on the dedication and commitment of many individuals throughout the industry.

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There has been need for a drift reduction technology in sugarcane for some time. After all, we are putting ourselves at great risk spraying so much glyphosate (Roundup and generics) on our fallow land, often in close proximity to our crop. Yes, air induction and other drift reducing nozzles help by discharging less of the smaller droplets (called "fines"), which are so prone to drift. But even more importantly, is that when winds are at their highest in south Louisiana, it is the prime time for applications of our spring pre-emergence herbicides as well as asulam (Asulox, Asulam) and/or Envoke. Since most of these applications are made on a band, spraying these fields in any sort of wind results in the spray being diluted as it is blown off the band, resulting in poorer weed control.

For several years now, many growers were utilizing their old Roundup hooded sprayers or shop made replicas to spray on top of the band with asulam and spring herbicides. But many of these hoods were 40 inches or so wide which increases herbicide costs and were only useful when banding in the spring. There have also been problems with the "scissor" attachments, which mount the hood to the toolbar.

Several growers on the Teche have been fabricating a very innovative, inexpensive, and versatile hooded sprayer that can not only spray banded applications, but unlike the traditional hoods, can spray broadcast in their fallow land as well (Figure 1).

The design is simple, but of course, every grower has his own modifications. It is a matter of mounting plastic corrugated culverts (the culverts for a five row sprayer cost less than $200) onto a fairly rigid toolbar of your choice. The culvert will need to be cut into three sections, and the toolbar will need to be hydraulically hinged for storage and when traveling on roadways (Figure 2). Attached to the culvert are sheets of "refrigeration insulation," which is nothing more than a sheet of clear, flexible vinyl, which is quite durable. The plastic "drapes" drag the row and prevent smaller droplets from getting swept from under the hood by high winds.

Some growers have two sets of hoses running along the culverts – one for broadcast and one for banding. The nozzle bodies are mounted through holes drilled through the top of the culverts. One can change the configuration (i.e. banding versus broadcast) by simply connecting the feeder hose to the correct line via a brass quick connect fitting. Others simply use one line of hoses, and attach drops and fittings to angle certain tips toward the cane when banding herbicides.

Of course, the one and only problem with this type of sprayer is the same with all hooded type sprayers. How do you know if you have a clogged nozzle? Most of the growers building these sprayers use the Red Ball® flow indicators (Figure 3). They will allow a quick visual indicator if flow is restricted in any of the hoses. Unfortunately, most of the growers using the Red Ball indicators mentioned that they require replacing them every year or so. Sunlight and also thick colored herbicides stain the indicators rendering them useless. Other growers have more advanced spray controller computers set up which provide alerts when the pressure changes in any of the lines due to clogged tips. Most of the growers using the sprayers for the past year or two mentioned that rarely are

glyphosate products a problem with clogging unless there is dirt or debris in the tank. The main problems will occur with dry flowable and dry formulated products that tend to settle out of suspension.

One other tip given by a grower who has used these sprayers for several years: cut the culvert not perfectly in half, but to cut the rear end of the culvert a few inches shorter than the front half. The vinyl refrigerator insulation should be cut longer in the rear to compensate for the height difference to the ground (Figure 4). This allows for more leniency when the tractor gets to a headland or in laser leveled fields, preventing the rear of the hood from knocking the ground as the tractor rapidly hits higher ground. He has noticed through the past seasons that most of the sprayers without this modification have quite a bit of damage on the rear half of the culvert, which will eventually require replacement.

Special thanks are given to Mike Robichaux of Frank Martin Farms, and David Allain, of A.V. Allain & Sons for their input on this article.

Figure 1

Figure 2

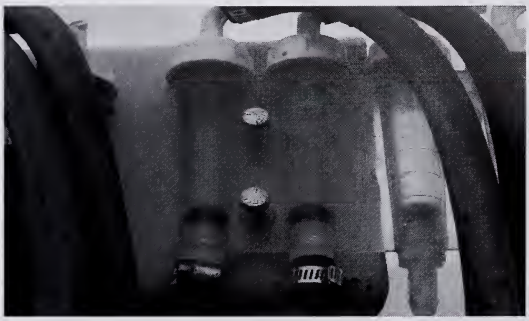

Figure 3

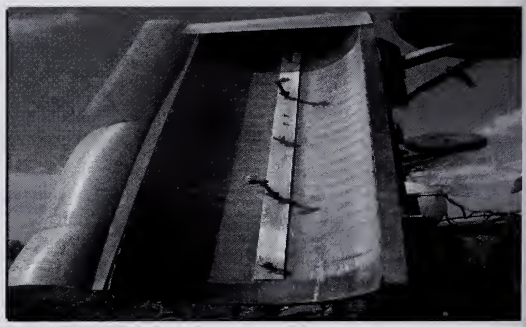

Figure 4

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2004.

Research Title: Applications of Remote Sensing Technology for the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry *Lead Scientist: Richard M. Johnson, Research Agronomist, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Reseach Unit, Houma, LA*

Three large producer fields in Terrebonne (2) and Iberville (1) Parishes were mapped in 2002 and 2003 to evaluate the potential value of variable rate (VR) lime application methods. The fields were soil sampled using conventional (composite from random locations) and grid (1-acre) sampling techniques. Lime requirements were calculated and application maps were prepared. The field in Iberville Parish (St. Louis Plantation) was 30 acres in size and with a soil pH ranging from 5.1 to 6.4 and the recommended lime rate ranging from 0 to 2 T/A. On the 49-acre site in Terrebonne Parish (Naquin Farms) the soil pH ranged from 4.9 to 6.4 and the lime rate from 0 to 2 T/A. Finally, on a 26-acre field in Terrebonne Parish (Ellendale Plantation) the soil pH ranged from 5.0 to 7.2 and the lime rate from 0 to 3.25 T/A. Three treatments were investigated in all tests: 1) Conventional (non-variable) lime 2) VR lime, and 3) No lime. For each field grid sampling significantly reduced the number of acres requiring lime compared to random sampling.

The field at Naquin Farms was harvested in 2002 (plant cane), 2003 (first stubble), and 2004 (second stubble). The total yield for the three crops was higher where either the VR or conventional lime application method was used. However, the conventional application method produced cane and sugar yields that were greater than the VR method. The 2003 plant cane crop at St. Louis Plantation did not show a significant response to lime application in cane tonnage, TRS or sugar per acre. However, results from the 2004 first-stubble crop showed a significant advantage with the VR method in terms of both cane and sugar yields. The plant cane crop at Ellendale plantation demonstrated a numeric advantage in both cane and sugar yields with the VR method. These combined results are encouraging and indicate that it was possible to achieve equivalent or superior yields with the VR application of lime. To maximize the benefits and provide year to year consistency with the VR method may require some modification of the procedures used to generate the lime recommendations. Fields have been identified and mapped in 2004 to repeat this research with lime application to occur in February or early March, 2005 in plant-cane crops.

A study was conducted in the spring of 2004 to investigate the use of leaf reflectance measurements combined with plant pigment measurements as an aid in the identification and separation of seedlings resulting from true crosses (hybrids) from the unwanted selfs, hopefully while they were still in the greenhouse. Seven varieties were selected for reflectance analysis, including five commercial sugarcane varieties, one noble cane, and one wild cane. Differences in reflectance were observed for each variety, with the varieties having a 3-fold difference in reflectance values. Reflectance measurements at 560 and 700 nm and reciprocal reflectance at 700 and 710 nm provided the best

discrimination (76%) with single wavelengths while vegetation indices based on multiple wavelengths could improve the varietal discrimination to 81%. When all wavelengths were included in the analysis the varieties were correctly classified in 100% of the cases using plant pigment data and in 89% of the cases using the reflectance data. Finally, in all cases the wild sugarcane was correctly classified. In one case a commercial variety was classified as a wild cane. This method should prove useful in separating sugarcane varieties in the field and in identifying seedlings of undesirable selfs from the more desirable hybrids while they are still in the greenhouse. This will improve selection efficiency and the release of superior varieties from sugarcane varietal development programs.

Research Title: Isolation of a Cell Wall Acid Invertase Gene from Sugarcane *Lead Scientist: Sarah E. Lingle, Research Plant Physiologist, USDA-ARS, SRRC, New Orleans, LA*

Parts of two cell wall invertase genes, cell wall invertase-1 (*Cwin*1) and cell wall invertase-2 (*Cwin*2) were isolated and sequenced. It was demonstrated that *Cwin*1 is the predominant gene turned on in sugarcane stalks. We screened a bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC) library (this is a series of filters spotted with bacteria that contain large pieces of sugarcane DNA) and selected several spots that contained the *Cwin*1 gene. We then obtained the bacteria that had the sugarcane DNA with the *Cwin*1 gene. We have used a technique called "gene walking" that allows us to sequence from the known parts of the gene into the unknown parts. We have now sequenced about 60% of the gene, based on comparisons with the *Cwin*1 gene from corn. We will continue "walking" and sequencing the gene in 2005. Experiments with Muntok Java, a *Saccharum* species hybrid, and PIN 84-1, a *S. spontaneum*, showed that changes in cell wall invertase enzyme activity during internode development are caused by changes in how much the *Cwin*1 gene is turned on and off. Internodes of PIN 84-1 had higher levels of *Cwin*1 turned on in young internodes than those of Muntok Java, while in mature internodes the opposite was true. Young internodes of PIN 84-1 had higher sucrose concentrations than those of Muntok Java, but mature Muntok Java internodes continued to accumulate sucrose. The expression of the *Cwin*1 gene and cell wall invertase activity in internodes may contribute to sucrose accumulation in sugarcane despite the fact that it breaks sucrose down.

Research Title: Variety Testing in Nurseries, Infield Trials, Outfield Trials and Specialty Studies *Lead Scientist: Edwis O. Dufrene, Agronomist, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Reseach Unit, Houma, LA*

In an attempt to develop more information regarding the performance of experimental varieties, replicated infield trials are being planted throughout the industry on soils representative of the industry. Forty varieties from the 2003 assignment series were planted to two nurseries and two infield tests in 2004. Fifty-nine varieties from the 2004 HoCP series plus three varieties from the RSB (Recurrent Selection for Borers) program were planted to three nursery trials in 2004. In addition, an infield test consisting of nineteen varieties from the 2002 series was established on heavy soil at the Sugarcane Research Laboratory's Ardoyne Farm. Eight infield trials (with thirty varieties from the 1999 through the 2002 series) and fifteen nursery trials (containing forty-five varieties from the 1999 through the 2003 series) were harvested in 2004 with LCP 85-384 being used as the commercial standard for comparison in all tests. CP 70-321, HoCP 85-845, HoCP 91-555, and/or HoCP 96-540 were also included for comparison. Data from these trials will be used to determine what varieties to advance for further testing and help in deciding what parents to use in the crossing program. By utilizing this

information breeders can begin using experimental lines with identified superior traits as parents earlier in the crossing program.

Three date of planting tests were harvested in 2004. These tests also looked at the effect of planting date on method of planting (billet vs. whole stalk). This data consistently shows an advantage to planting varieties early. One interesting note is that LCP 85-384 was least affected by planting date from 1996 to 1999. Since 2000, data suggests that LCP 85-384 can suffer yield reductions when planted late. These tests also demonstrate that billet plantings can be very inconsistent and are more susceptible to yield losses. Also, these yield reductions from billet planting can be carried over into the stubble crops. It is important that these tests be replanted so that data can be obtained on recently released varieties, to aid farmers in developing planting schedules.

An assessment of early season growth and maturity can assist growers and processors in estimating the yield potential of the crop. Weekly growth measurements were taken between March 31 and October 6 on plant-cane and first-stubble crops of CP 70-321, LCP 85-384, HoCP 91-555, and HoCP 96-540 planted at the Sugarcane Research Laboratory's Ardoyne Farm. Maturity curves for first stubble and plant cane crops of the current and soon to be released varieties planted at the Ardoyne Farm were developed using a 2-week harvesting interval beginning on August 30, 2004 for the first-stubble and September 27, 2004 for the plant-cane. In addition, studies designed to look at varietal responses to the ripener, Polado, and studies designed to look at alternatives to Polado were repeated in 2004. Summarized data from each sampling from the various studies along with data collected from previous years at the same sampling date (for comparison) are distributed to millers, growers, extension personnel, and researchers with one or two page narratives via email within days of the sampling to insure that the information is timely.

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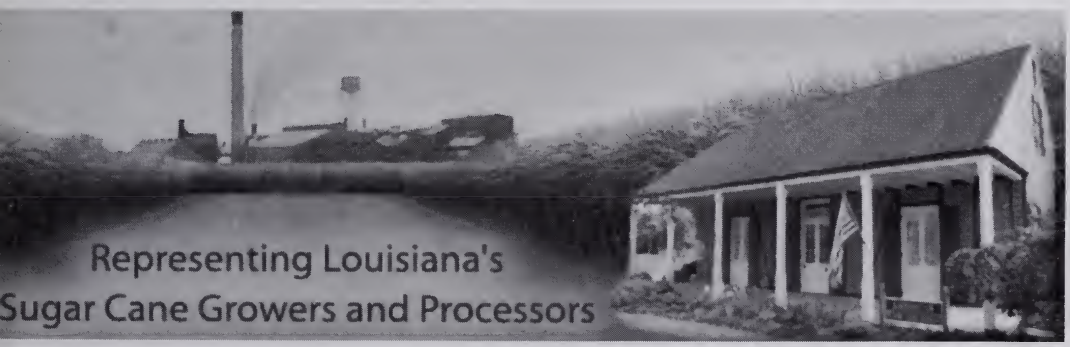

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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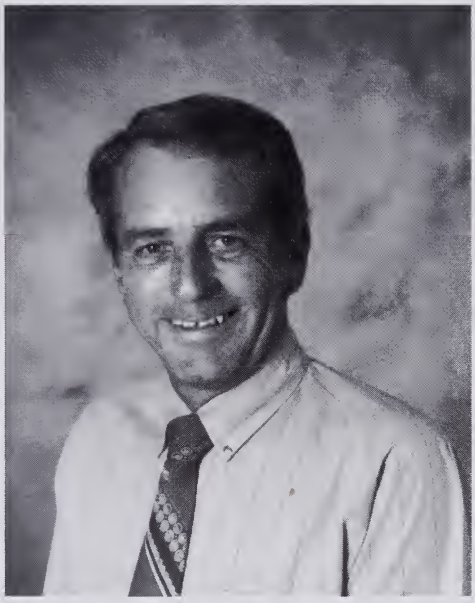

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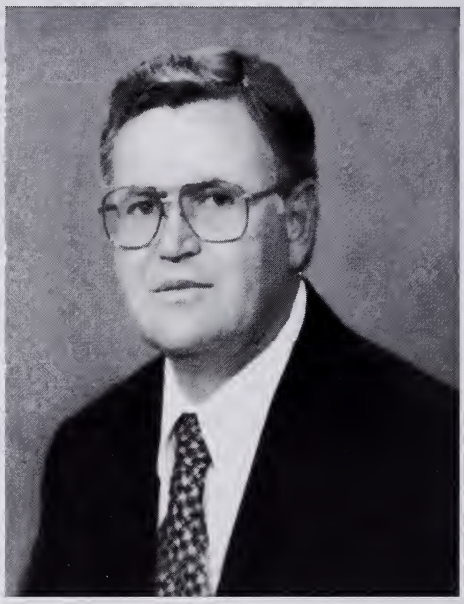

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Up Front With The League

by Jim Simon

It's Time to Stand Up for All Natural Sugar

by Andy Briscoe, President & CEO, The Sugar Association

Editor's Note: A special thanks to Andy Briscoe for the following contribution. Andy is the President and CEO of the Sugar Association which is a national organization, in which the League belongs, that is charged with promoting the consumption of sugar as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle through the use of sound science and research. The following are a few initiatives currently underway at the Association.

Sugar Industry Environmental Review

After trending downward for the past 5 years, sugar consumption seems to have turned the corner. The May 2005 WASDE estimates and projections are numbers we can all be thankful for. Specifically, Domestic Food Use estimates for FY 2004/05 are 197,000 tons higher than the reported 2003/04 deliveries. And the projected 2005/06 deliveries add another 75,000 tons. If these trends continue, total 2005/06 deliveries could be as much as 272,000 tons above 2003/04 deliveries. Not something to take to the bank, but certainly sounds better than what we have been experiencing.

Confronting Splenda

In December 2004, consumer research indicated that the public was being misled by Splenda advertising implying that their artificial sweetener was natural. That led to a lawsuit for false advertising and unfair competition being filed against McNeil Nutritionals/Johnson & Johnson in federal court under the Lanham Act. In addition to our lawsuit, nine class action lawsuits for false advertising have been filed by consumers in California, Florida and other states. Part of the Splenda initiative is a public relations effort to get the truth out to consumers. A website (www.truthaboutsplenda.com) was launched at a press conference held at the National Press Club. As of January 23, grocery retail sales figures show declining sales for two Splenda package sizes, the first negative in the five years Splenda has been in the marketplace. We anticipate the negative response to Splenda will grow as more and more consumers become aware of the facts that the final product is not sugar and does not have sugar in it, is made with chlorine, is obviously not natural, and is in fact a chlorinated artificial sweetener. More public relations efforts are planned.

Sugar Promotion Program / Sugar: Sweet By Nature Takes Off

In September 2004, the Sugar Association Board approved a voluntary generic ad campaign to promote the benefits of all natural sugar. Initially, five Association members have pledged approximately $3.5 million per year for the next three years. Two pilot markets have been selected, where ads started running on May 19 to test the concepts and to confirm that generic advertising does produce positive results. A fourth quarter (October-December 2005) campaign is planned in seven key markets of promotion campaign participants. We plan to present test market results at the Association's September Board meeting.

Accuracy In Labeling

As many of you are aware, we were successful last November - after 20 years of dealing with FDA - to get FDA to officially rule that prohibits the use of "sugar and/or high fructose corn syrup" on soft drinks not containing sugar. Now, the challenge is to persuade FDA to enforce its own regulation. Thus in May, the Association filed a trade complaint with FDA reiterating that U.S. soft drink companies continue to illegally label their products with "sugar and/or HFCS" ingredient statements. This complaint letter states that FDA is required by its own ruling to send warning letters advising companies that FDA will enforce its November 2004 ruling.

In addition, we have met with FDA several times to clarify our concerns over present usage of "less sugar," "reduced sugar" or "sugar-free" nutrient content claims – particularly when there is no science to support that such claims provide any nutritional benefits to consumers. One consumer has already taken the bull by the horns by filing a class action lawsuit against major cereal companies, declaring that "less sugar" and "reduced sugar" claims are implied health claims for which consumers pay a premium price and receive no health benefit.

E-Business – Buying All Natural Sugar Products Online

Finally, one of the best ways to promote sugar is to buy sugar-containing products. In this day and age of online purchasing, the Sugar Association has created an E-business website (http://www.sugar.org/ebusiness/). These sugar-based products include some of the 200 regional soft drinks which still use sugar, food products and sugar-based cosmetics. Buying all natural products can make a difference – over the last 3-4 years, sugar sales for use in beverages have trended upward by double digit percentages. One of the regional bottlers highlighted on our e-business website says sales of his all natural, sugar-based products have increased 40% per year for the last 5 years. I believe the generation X-ers are looking for and willing to pay a premium price for all natural, sugar-based beverages. And we are doing everything we can to promote this concept to the general public. So if you have not purchased a sugar-based product recently, today is the time to go online and have it delivered to your doorstep.

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Washington Update

By Don Wallace

Sugar Wins House Appropriations Vote
Senate Energy - CAFTA
USDA WASDE June Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

An anti-sugar amendment by Rep. Gary Blumenauer was defeated on the House floor by an overwhelming 338-86 vote in early June during debate on the House agricultural appropriations package. The package, approved shortly after the sugar vote, includes $3.6 million for construction of the new research facility near Houma.

The Senate agricultural appropriations committee marked up and reported out its version of the FY06 agricultural spending package in late June. The package includes $4 million for construction of the new research facility near Houma, along with a $250,000 increase in green-cane harvesting research. Senate Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran (R-MS) is hopeful that all eleven appropriations bills can be approved by the Senate before the August recess, leading to conferences in September with the goal to complete action on all appropriations matters by the end of the fiscal year (September 30).

Keep in mind that Congress is also working on budget reconciliation bills to cut government spending for the coming year. This process is to culminate on September 16, when all authorizing committees must provide their plans to limit mandatory spending to pre-set limits. The problem is that appropriators, who are responsible for discretionary spending cuts, are raiding mandatory spending programs to make their own cuts, making the job of authorizing committees that much tougher. For example, House and Senate Agriculture Committees are to cut $3 billion in mandatory program spending as a part of the budget agreement reached by House and Senate leadership, but the House agricultural appropriations bill contains over $1 billion in mandatory spending cuts. Assuming that the Senate appropriators follow the lead of the House and the appropriations package is approved before the September 16 deadline set by the budget committees, the appropriators will get credit for these cuts. Authorizing committees, such as agriculture committees, will have to make further cuts to mandatory programs to reach their own budget targets.

Senate Energy

The Senate worked on their version of an energy bill throughout the early part of June and floor action was expected to be completed during the week of June 20. The Senate bill contains a loan guarantee program for construction of sucrose ethanol facilities, as well as a grant program for development of cane ethanol projects in all of the cane states. It also sets a new renewable fuels standard, an ethanol production target of 8 billion gallons by 2012, double the House-passed target and current corn ethanol production capability. The House has completed action on its energy bill and awaits Senate action before moving to a conference to resolve differences between the two bills.

CAFTA

The Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee completed mock markup action on the draft CAFTA implementing legislation in mid-June and the Administration is now seeking to complete the process of developing actual implementing legislation, possibly before the end of June. There may be an effort to move the legislation in the Senate first, before the July 4th recess, in hopes of building momentum in the House.

Industry discussions with Members of Congress in early and mid-June were the subject of intense media coverage, particularly as the Members and the Administration met to discuss options for resolving the sugar issues. Beet-state Senators initiated efforts to get detailed sucrose ethanol language included in the Senate version of the energy bill. The plan, which included an additional $1.00 in excise tax credits (above the current $.51 credit to which sucrose, corn and other commodity-based products is eligible) and a 100 million gallon mandate for sucrose ethanol, encountered resistance from corn-state Senators and was not included in the Senate package.

USDA WASDE June Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its June World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. The June projections for 2004/05 and 2005/06 were unchanged from May. 2004/05 beginning stocks are at 1,897,000 short tons (raw value). Total production is 8,067,000 short tons, with beet production at 4,693,000 and cane production at 3,374,000. Total supply is 11,603,000. Ending stocks are at1,343,000 tons. The stocks-to-use ratio remains at 13.1 percent. The 2005/06 total production is at 8,140,000, beet production at 4,370,000 and cane production at 3,770,000 tons. Imports are at 1,591,000 tons, including TRQ imports of 1,206,000, bringing total supply to 11,074,000 tons. Exports are projected at 200,000, deliveries at 10,115,000 tons and use at 10,315,000. Ending stocks are 759,000 and stocks-to-use ratio is at 7.4 percent. State-by-state production estimates were not included in the June report.

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This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product label(s) at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations. Always wear proper protective equipment.

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On The Farm

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report - Distribution of Ho 95-988
Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety Ho 95-988

Most of the industry has received sufficient rain and cane is growing very rapidly. Both of the newly released varieties (HoCP 96-540 and L 97-128) are now starting to show very good growth rates and are taller than LCP 85-384. For these two new varieties, in most cases, there will certainly be no problem in having four hard joints of cane showing by the 4th of July. Preliminary reports from the USDA-ARS farm indicates that in a one week period 97-128 grew more than 10 in. In addition to rapid growth reports in L 97-128, there are some reports of smut whips. In previous years, smut has been reported in test field plots and seed increase stations of LCP 97-128. In checking seed plots on the secondary stations last year, the overall percentage of smut-infected stools was well below the 2% level. None of these reports indicated an infection of a high enough percentage that would have resulted in yield losses. The smut whips in L 97-128 are very visible because they grow extremely tall and well above the canopy. There may have been small sections within a field that ware relatively heavy but when the field was looked at as a whole, the infection was low. So, do not be alarmed when you start to see these black whips above the green canopy of the cane.

Distribution of Ho 95-988

This year there are no new varieties up for release to the Louisiana sugarcane industry. However, there is seed of the variety Ho 95-988 available for distribution from the League's secondary stations. Ho 95-988 was dropped from the selection program for a number of reasons. The two major reasons for the variety falling from grace were its lack of borer resistance and the amount of smut found in test fields and in seed increase plots.

There is always an ever-looming threat that a disease such as rust can come into a monoculture variety crop (LCP 85-384) and severely reduce yield potential. Therefore, it was felt that a variety with a different genetic background should be released to the Louisiana sugarcane industry. Because Ho 95-988 has a much different parental background than the varieties grown by the industry, a number of researchers requested that data collection on Ho 95-988 's yielding ability continue. Although the variety was dropped, data was gathered in plant cane, first stubble, and second stubble outfield test plots. These data indicated that Ho 95-988's yield in sugar per acre was equal to or better than LCP 85-384. Because, it was dropped from the program there is only one planting cycle of information available. Ho 95-988 was replanted in out field tests in the fall of 2004.

Because Ho 95-988 was dropped from the seed increase program, it was not replanted on the primary increase stations and only second stubble was available when it was decided to bring the variety back. In an effort to make sure that the seed sent to the secondary stations was of the highest quality possible, the stubble seed

of Ho 95-988 on the primary stations was tested for RSD and yellow leaf. The results of which indicated that neither disease was present in the seed that was to be increased. As an additional precaution, all seed of Ho 95-988 replanted on the primary stations was subjected to a hot-water treatment before being replanted. The following year (2003) HWT seed was harvested and sent to the secondary stations and is now available for distribution in 2005.

At this time, Ho 95-988 looks very promising and good stands can be found at almost all secondary stations. Ho 95-988 is a very broadleaf heavy canopy variety that should shade the middles early and help with grass problems. There have been some reports of rust on the secondary stations, and last year, there were a number of smut shoots cut from seed increase plots of Ho 95-988.

The rest of this month's article is a reprint of the variety release statement for Ho 95-988. The release statement was originally presented in the June 2004 issue of The Sugar Bulletin. Also included in this month's issue of the Bulletin is the application form for Ho 95-988 and a list of secondary stations from which seedcane of this variety is available. So that your allocation of seed cane can be made from a secondary station of your choice, please fill out all requested information.

Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety Ho 95-988

(The official notice of release for this variety was published in the June 2004 issue of The Sugar Bulletin.)

The Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, The Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and the American Sugarcane League of the U.S.A., Inc., working cooperatively to develop improved sugarcane varieties, have jointly developed and hereby announce the release of a new variety, Ho 95-988, for commercial planting in the summer of 2004.

Ho 95-988 is a product of the cross CP 86-941 x US 89-12 bred in 1990 and selected as part of the ARS's Sugarcane Research Unit's basic breeding program at Houma (Ho), Louisiana. All four of its grandparents are wild- or foreign-commercial derivative varieties, two involving *Saccharum spontaneum,* one involving *S. robustum,* and one being a BC_2 progeny of Hawaiian variety, H 49-3646. This variety is not closely related to any variety currently grown in Louisiana. It has a high population of medium-sized stalks that turn purple when exposed to sunlight. Its stalk number is 90% and weight is 120% of Louisiana's principal variety, LCP 85-384, averaged over plant, first-stubble and second-stubble crops. Ho 95-988 is an excellent stubbling variety.

Yield data from a total of 61 mechanically harvested, replicated yield trials on both light- and heavy textured soils indicate that Ho 95-988 produces about 7% more cane and total recoverable sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 averaged across plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble, and third-stubble crops. Ho 95-988 produces levels of recoverable sugar per ton of cane and fiber content comparable to those of LCP 85-384. Field observations suggest that Ho 95-988 has greater stalk erectness and lower sheath adherence to the stalk at harvest than LCP 85-384; hence, yield losses associated with the mechanical harvesting of Ho 95-988 are not expected to be as great.

Ho 95-988 is resistant to sugarcane mosaic virus (strains A, B, and D) and sorghum mosaic virus (strains H, I, and M). The variety is resistant to rust (*Puccinia melanocephala* H. & P. Syd.) and leaf scald [*Xanthomonas albilineans* (Ashby) Dowson] diseases under natural field infection conditions. It is moderately susceptible to smut (*Ustilago scitaminea* H. & P. Syd.); however, significant yield losses from this disease are not expected. Similar to essentially all sugarcane cultivars released in Louisiana, Ho 95-988 can sustain significant reductions in yields of total recoverable sugar and cane in ratoon crops from ratoon stunting disease (RSD) (*Clavibacter xyli*

[See Ho 95-988 *(Continued on 23)*]

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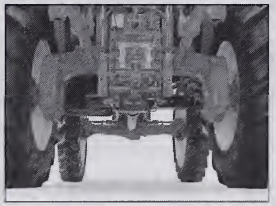

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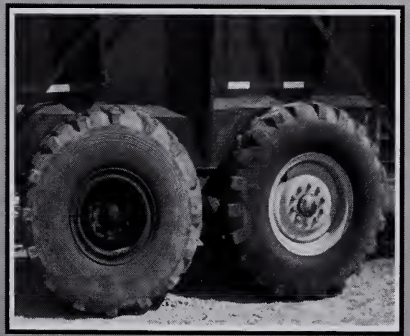

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THE LAST DAY ON WHICH APPLICATIONS FOR SEED CANE OF Ho 95-988 CAN BE ACCEPTED IS AUGUST 5, 2005

The cane will cost $51.00 per ton. The League will keep $1.00 per ton and give the rest to the Secondary Stations. The League will make every effort to fill orders at locations selected by applicants. It is important that you fill out the application completely (first, second, and third choices) so that we might provide you with the best service.

Tear Off Application Below and Mail

APPLICATION FOR Ho 95-988 SEED CANE

Date _____

TO: American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc. P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302 0938

Gentlemen:

I hereby apply for _____ tons of Ho 95-988 seed cane. I agree to pay when an allocation is assigned to me, and I am to be notified concerning this and supplied with the name and address of the grower from whom I am to get the cane, which I will send for on a specified delivery date. I understand that this cane will not be trash free.

If for any reason this order cannot be filled, it is understood that my money will be refunded to me.

My 2005 **total acreage** in cane for **sugar and seed** is _____ acres.

The locations I wish to receive my allocation from are:

1st choice _____

2nd choice _____

3rd choice _____

This application is made with the full understanding on my part that it may not be possible to get as much as I apply for, and that there is no guarantee expressed or implied that this seed is free of mixtures, diseases, insects, weeds or weed seeds.

My farm is located between these two towns: _____ and _____

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LIST OF STATIONS WHERE Ho 95-988 IS AVAILABLE

The American Sugar Cane League has been directed by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to undertake a fair and impartial distribution of the newly released variety of cane known as Ho 95-988.

It has been grown with the understanding that those growing Ho 95-988 will be paid the price of mill cane plus a bonus, and the League is authorized by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to charge a distribution fee of $1.00 per ton.

If you wish to order seed cane of this new variety, please fill out the application form found in this issue of THE SUGAR BULLETIN. **NO OTHER FORM OF APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED AND IT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAN SUGAR CANE LEAGUE, P. O. DRAWER 938, THIBODAUX, LA 70302, NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2005.**

The price of this seed cane is $51.00 per ton, cut and loaded on your vehicle at the secondary station. The cane will be cut with a mechanical harvester. There is no guarantee, expressed or implied; that the seed offered is free of mixtures, diseases, insects, weeds, or weed seeds.

For the convenience of delivering and handling Ho 95-988, the League is requesting purchasers to name three secondary stations from which they are willing to receive cane. The League will attempt to fill all orders from one of the three selected secondary stations. If this is not possible, the order will be filled from the nearest secondary station. If only one secondary station is named and the order cannot be filled from that station, then the order will be filled from a secondary station selected by the League.

On August 5, 2005, all seed will be allocated and there will be no switching of secondary stations.

The secondary stations possessing Ho 95-988 are:

Parish	Station	Operator
Ascension	Palo Alto	Palo Alto
	New Hope	Triple M Farms
Assumption	Belle Alliance	Cavalier Farms
	Cedar Grove	E.G. Robichaux
	Glenwood	Landry Farms
	Little Texas	Tex Emma
	Lula	Landry Bros.
	Goldmine	Thibodeaux Bros.
	Westfield	Landry Farms
Iberia	Caroline	Herman Walet
	Freyou Farms	Glenn & Wayne Freyou
	Enterprise	M.A. Patout & Son
	Ronald Hebert Farms	Ronald Hebert, Jr.
	Square B Farms	John Edmond Broussard
	Ulysee Gonsoulin	Ronald Gonsoulin
Iberville	Cannonburg	Cannonburg Plantation
	Frank Pearce & Sons	Frank Pearce & Sons
	Bayou Goula	Alton Landry Inc.

Parish	Station	Operator
Lafayette	Triple V Farm	Daniel Viator
Lafourche	Raceland	Ellender Farms
	McLeod	Big D Farms
	Leighton	Godfrey Knight
Pointe Coupee	Alma	Alma Planting Co.
	Lacour	G & L Planting
Rapides	Corley Farms	Albert & Henry Corley
St. James	Blackberry	Blackberry Farms
	Graugnard Farms	Graugnard Fauns
	Martin & Poche	Martin & Poche
St. John	Glendale	T. Lanaux & Sons
St. Martin	B & T Farms	Dane Berard
	Huey Dugas Farms	Huey Dugas
	Levert St. John	Levert St. John
St. Mary	Allain	Adeline Planting
	Bayou Cane Co., Inc.	Jessie Breaux
	Breaux Bros.	Herbert Breaux
	Champagne Farms	Mike Champagne
	Frank Martin Farms	Robert Judice
	Northside Planting Co.	Jackie, Clint, & Chad Judice
Terrebonne	Magnolia	Danny Naquin Farms
Vermillion	Edward Zenon Farm	Edward Zenon
	Sam Duplantis	Sam Duplantis
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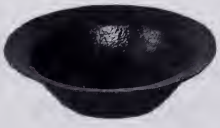

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2004.

Research Title: Basic Breeding: Meeting the Ever Changing Needs of Louisiana's Cane Industry

Lead Scientist: John Veremis, Research Geneticist, USDA-RS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

The main goal of the USDA-ARS, Sugarcane Research Laboratory's basic breeding program is to produce superior cultivars for Louisiana by broadening the genetic diversity in sugarcane with selected new parents and breeding lines. With the funding we received during the past years, we have doubled our photoperiod treatment capacity by increasing the number of parents and crosses that can be maintained in the same space as used previously. We demonstrated that tree pots with drip irrigation are more space efficient for maintaining the parental breeding material during the crossing season. We have broadened the genetic base by developing new and improved sugarcane germplasm and breeding lines through forced flowering synchronization to hybridize select *Saccharum* species and related genera. We made 900 crosses in the 2004 crossing season at Houma that involved: commercial x commercial-lines; commercial x new *S. spontaneum* accessions from Thailand and China; true *S. officinarum*, *S. barberi, S. robustum* and *S. sinense*; *Miscanthus* and *Erianthus*. This will allow us to select and evaluate from a large number of new genetic combinations. We continue to evaluate the effects of temperature (hot and cold) on pollen viability in an attempt to increase the number of hybrid seed harvested from the female parent in our crosses. We are using molecular genetic techniques to expedite the identification of true hybrids. By augmenting traditional approaches with new molecular screening techniques, we anticipate that the new germplasm we develop will further broaden and improve the genetic base of sugarcane for sugar and/or bioenergy.

We are evaluating basic and commercial clones under artificial and field conditions for early and late season cold tolerance. We transplanted seedlings from basic crosses (commercial type X wild sugarcane *S. spontaneum* accessions from the foothills of the Himalaya) selected for cold tolerance to the field. We identified hybrids and BC1's that did not exhibit leaf injury for exposure to frost in the field and selected the best for use as parental lines for the 2005 crossing season. We have established a Recurrent Cold Tolerance Selection program with hybrids from SES 234 X LCP85-384, that expressed cold tolerance after an artificial exposure to a ten-hour, 10°F (-15°C) freeze in December 2004. We identified F1 hybrids and BC1's that expressed superior early spring emergence in replicated field tests. If successful, this research will lead to the development of high-yielding varieties with enhanced early and late season cold tolerance.

Research Title: Insuring the Availability of Disease Resistant Sugarcane Varieties for Louisiana

Lead Scientist: Michael P. Grisham, Research Plant Pathologist, USDA-RS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

Improved Testing for RSD. Approximately 650 varieties selected for advancement from first-line trials in 2002 and 2003 were inoculated in the field by shaving the stubble in the fall and inoculating

the cut surface with juice from RSD-infected stalks. Stalks of the inoculated plants were collected in the fall of 2003 and 2004, respectively, and infection levels of RSD were determined by tissue-blot immunoassay. Previously, cuttings were inoculated with the RSD bacterium in the greenhouse and infected plants were transplanted to the field for further evaluation. Testing was limited to 30-40 clones per year. Testing varieties earlier in the breeding cycle provides breeders with additional information to use in deciding which varieties to advance, provides an RSD evaluation of all varieties that will be sent to Florida for use as parents (previously, testing was often done after varieties were selected and shipped), and provides larger numbers of progeny needed to evaluate the performance of parents as sources of RSD resistance.

Testing Varieties for YLS Susceptibility. Seven Louisiana sugarcane varieties and six Florida varieties were planted in a three-replicate test to monitor the natural spread of SCYLV, the virus that causes YLS. In the plant-cane crop (2003), YLS was found in only one plot of LCP 85-384 and in one plot each of Florida varieties CP 72-1210 and CP 78-1628. In the first-ratoon crop (2004), the monthly sampling of plants showed an increase in the incidence in the plots infected in 2003 and infection in the second of three replicate plots of LCP 85-384. Infection was not found among plots of CP 70-321, HoCP 85-845, HoCP 91-555, Ho 95-988, HoCP 95-540, or L 97-128. These results indicate that LCP 85-384 is more susceptible to spread than some of the other Louisiana varieties, but YLS has been found in most of these varieties in previous studies. Among the Florida varieties in 2004, YLS was found in all three replicate plots of CP 72-1210, two plots of CP 78-1628, one plot of CP 72-2086, and one plot of CP 89-2143. The variety CP 89-2143 is planted in outfield tests and is being considered for commercial release in Louisiana.

Marker-assisted Selection. A population of 120 progeny from self-pollinated LCP 85-384 has been established for inoculation with strains of the mosaic virus, the smut fungus, and the RSD bacterium in greenhouse tests in 2005. If progeny are found that are susceptible to mosaic or smut or resistance to RSD, they will be examined for genetic markers associated with the disease reaction. A rapid laboratory test can then be used to identify the presence of the marker. Identification of trait-specific genetic markers for our major diseases would improve the efficiency of the breeding program by allowing breeders to identify and discard seedlings that are susceptible to disease before they are planted to the field or advance a variety with resistance.

Research Title: Improved Production Stability and Efficiency for the Louisiana Sugar Industry
Lead Scientist: Ryan P. Viator, Research Plant Physiologist, USDA-RS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

Large scale field studies were conducted throughout the industry to evaluate various aspects of residue management including removal timing, mechanical and biological removal alternatives, influence of crop age and soil type, interaction with sugarcane ripener and tillage practices, germplasm tolerance, and the use of self-stripping varieties. In addition we conducted ten cultural practices studies evaluating such things as: date of planting, conservation tillage, and the influence of chopper harvester ground and extractor speed on cane and sugar yields.

Several studies indicated that even a March mechanical removal will reduce yield up to 1000 lb/A compared to a treatment where the residue was allowed to remain. Thus, producers should both burn or mechanically remove the trash blanket no later than in January. Another study indicated that mechanical removal (Gravois brush, Trash Tiger, and Orthman) may not be as good as burning on certain soil types because burning produced significantly higher yields over mechanical removal. In fact, mechanical removal did not improve yield over complete residue retention. Our study investigating treatment to harvest intervals following Polado application and residue retention on the subsequent stubble crop indicated that non-removal reduces yields when compared to mechanical removal in November.

Besides cultural solutions to residue management, we also identified five clones in our germplasm screening studies with excellent self-stripping ability and yields equivalent to commercial varieties based on hand-cut estimated yields. Self-stripping varieties could increase both harvesting and milling efficiency. Clones selected for emergence through the cold and wet soils under the residue blanket will be evaluated this spring as first stubble.

Furthermore, we have planted an additional test including 100 clones for early emergence through the trash blanket. A production system that incorporates residue retention would fit well in a conservation tillage system and could possibly lower fertilizer inputs. Besides being tolerant to mulch, early emergence alone should increase yields by effectively increasing the growing season by several weeks.

Research Title: Developing a High Throughput DNA Marker-Assisted Selection Procedure for the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry

Lead Scientist: Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist,USDA-RS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

The molecular marker methodology has become a powerful tool in addressing the variety verification needs of the Louisiana sugarcane breeding programs. The lead scientist continued to work closely with the variety development personnel in both Louisiana and Florida when concerns regarding variety identification arose. By fingerprinting the parental lines we can insure correct parental identification and assess the quality of the various crosses. Using these variety-specific DNA fingerprints, we insured that all of the parental lines involved in the Sugarcane Research Unit's breeding programs at both Houma (200) and Canal Point (50) were properly identified.

DNA extraction is the primary limiting step in the high-throughput application of the molecular marker technology in sugarcane breeding. We made great strides in adapting a high-throughput DNA extraction (HT) method from other commodities to use on sugarcane. With this procedure, a small piece (about 30 mm^2) of leaf tissue is used and a technician can process at least 600 DNA samples per day (about 60 samples per day using the other method). In 2004, a total of 6,000 DNA samples were prepared using the HT method. A total of 960 offspring from 40 basic crosses were fingerprinted using the high throughput equipment at the USDA-ARS, Mid South Area Genomics Laboratory to help select the true hybrids from these wild by commercial crosses. In addition, approximately 5,400 DNA samples were also extracted from 166 other commercial and basic crosses and have been stored inside the freezers for fingerprinting in 2005. Data from the fingerprinting will be used to assess the effectiveness of pollen sterility by cold temperature and the cross quality of commercial crosses produced at different locations. In addition, the HT technique will be used in 2005 to assess cross quality before transplanting seedling in the greenhouse. Poor crosses (<80% hybrids) will be discarded.

All the sugarcane varieties grown in the field today share the same cytoplasm source from the noble or chewing cane, *S. officinarum*. We are in the process of developing a brand-new source of sugarcane germplasm with their cytoplasm derived from the wild relative, *S. spontaneum*. In 2004, we evaluated among several thousand progeny, including F-1s, F-2s, BC-1, and BC-2s that were derived from crosses between *S. spontaneum* clones as the female and commercial varieties as the male, against the check varieties in seedling and first line trials. Forty-eight BC-1 clones that contained cytoplasm from the *S. spontaneum* were selected from the seedling nursery to be advanced to the first line trial in 2005. Another 6 BC-1 clones were selected from the first line trials to be advanced to the second line trials in 2005 due to their high vigor, population, and Brix (ranging from 16 to 19) and no symptoms of disease and borer damage. The 6 BC-1 clones will also be further backcrossed to high sugar commercial male clones in 2005 to produce the BC-2 generation. Some of the 10 F-1 hybrids from the cross between SES234, a *S. spontaneum* clone as the female, and LCP85-384 as

the male that showed unusual levels of cold tolerance were also backcrossed to high sugar commercial male clones during 2004 and their progeny will be evaluated in 2006. Hopefully, a new line of *spontaneum* cytoplasm-based varieties will be developed that will produce high sugar yields with increased tolerance to both stresses, associated with the environment and disease and insect pests.

Research Title: Completion of Project on the Optimization of Factory Applications of Dextranase *Lead Scientist: Gillian Eggleston, USDA-SRRC-ARS, New Orleans, LA*

This work was done in collaboration with Adrian Monge of Cora Texas factory and David Stewart of Alma factory. Further studies on the optimization of the use of commercial dextranases to breakdown dextran in Louisiana sugar manufacture were conducted in the 2004 grinding season at two factories. Several factory workshops were also held to demonstrate the simple, titration method of Eggleston (2004) to measure the activity of dextranases at the factory. Several factories are now using the method to a) economically compare activities of different dextranases, b) measure the activity of delivered batches, and c) monitor the changing activities on factory storage. Several factories have also chosen to use "concentrated" dextranase rather than traditional "non-concentrated" dextranases. An approximate 14 to 20-fold difference in activity now exists between the two concentration forms, as measured by the titration method. As dextranase applications to syrup are relatively uneconomical, only juice applications were studied. For dextranase application, one factory had installed a 5 min retention time (R_t) tank adjacent with the cush-cush tank, and the other factory used a 17 min R_t incubation tank. Dextran removal across the tanks was measured using both monoclonal antibody and Haze (alcohol precipitation) methods. Higher ppm dosage levels of dextranase were required for application to juice in the factory than to juice studied in the laboratory. Preparation of working solutions of "concentrated" dextranase are cost effective. Working solutions can be made up with distilled water, tap water, or a 25 Brix raw sugar (with no dextran) solution and are stable for at least 24 hours. In factory 1 where dextran levels were high, dextran breakdowns of greater than 90% were achieved using either a 1:1 or 1:4 working solution of "concentrated" dextranase. The greater the amount of dextran the easier it is to breakdown by dextranase, because of increased substrate/enzyme ratios. Dextranase application did not always alleviate all processing problems in factory boiling stations, because lower MW dextrans and other *Leuconostoc* deterioration products still existed. The project will be completed in the 2005 grinding season.

Research Title: Measures of Sugarcane Deterioration for Louisiana Factories *Lead Scientist: Gillian Eggleston, USDA-SRRC-ARS, New Orleans, LA*

This work was done in collaboration with Tony Parris of New Iberia factory and Adrian Monge of Cora Texas factory. Mannitol, formed by *Leuconostoc* bacteria, is a very sensitive indicator of sugarcane deterioration that directly affects processing and can predict problems from dextran and levan polysaccharides. An enzymatic method has been developed to measure mannitol in juice pressed from consignments of sugarcane delivered to the factory. This quantitative screening tool will allow factory staff to rapidly know which consignments of cane will affect processing negatively or reject consignments that will cause unacceptable processing problems. Mannitol is directly measured on a spectrophotometer using mannitol dehydrogenase as the enzyme catalyst. The stability of the reagents, limited cane juice preparation and linearity are described. This method is precise, accurate, compares favorably with an ion chromatography method, and can be easily performed using existing equipment in sugarcane factories. Mannitol can be measured after ~7 min at room

temperature and within 4 min if a 40 °C waterbath is used. The method is highly specific for mannitol and was not affected by the presence of sucrose, glucose, fructose, or dextran. The current cost is only ~60 U.S. cents per analysis. The relationship of mannitol with Haze dextran in over 300 pressed and crusher juices, and raw sugars, collected across the 2004 grinding season of a Louisiana factory, has also been obtained to help factories interpret mannitol data.

Ho 95-988 *(Continued from page 10)*

subsp. *xyli* Davis et al.). To assure minimal risk from smut and RSD, it is strongly advised that seed cane of this variety be free or nearly free of these diseases at planting. Ho 95-988 does not appear to be any more susceptible to the sugarcane yellow leaf virus than current commercially grown varieties. Ho 95-988 is susceptible to the sugarcane borer [*Diatraea saccharalis* (Fabricius)] and should not be grown in areas were insecticides cannot be applied.

Seed cane of Ho 95-988 will not be available for distribution by the American Sugarcane League until after July 1, 2005. At that time seed cane will be distributed in accordance with procedures that will be announced to all sugarcane growers in Louisiana. Inquiries concerning seed cane should be directed to the American Sugarcane League, 206 East Bayou Road, Thibodaux, LA 70301. Neither the United States Department of Agriculture nor the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station has seed cane available for distribution.

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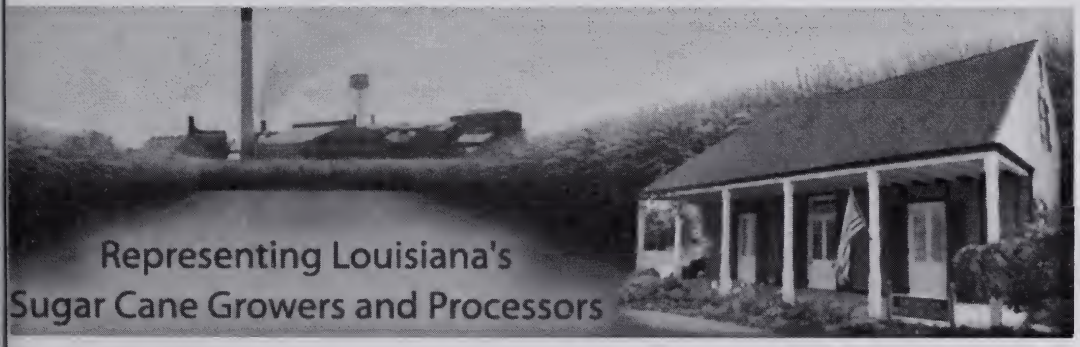

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
Phone: (225) 766-1359

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Up Front With The League

by Jim Simon

Press Conference
Third Axle Law
Contact Committee Meeting

On Friday July 15, the League held a "THANK YOU" press conference in Baton Rouge at the state capital. It was well attended by our members and the press. The event gave us an opportunity to say thank you to Governor Blanco and Senators Mary Landrieu and David Vitter for their support in our effort to defeat CAFTA. I also extend thanks to the Louisiana Farm Bureau for their continuing support of our effort to defeat CAFTA.

CAFTA barely passed in the Senate by a narrow 54-45 vote—by far the smallest margin among recent trade agreements in the pro-trade Senate. Opposition was bipartisan and both Louisiana Senators Mary Landrieu (D) and David Vitter (R) voted against the agreement. Governor Kathleen Blanco (D) has also been an outspoken critic, recently sending President Bush a letter that asked for sugar's removal from CAFTA and future trade deals.

Third Axle Law

Senate bill 141, which delays the required installation of a third axle on trailers hauling sugar cane from August 2008 to August 2010, has now become law. The bill became Act No. 330 when Governor Kathleen Blanco signed it into law in mid-July. Both the Senate and the House of Representatives favorably acted on the bill during the last legislative session. Many thanks to our Senators and Representatives who worked diligently to get the implementation of this burdensome requirement delayed for two additional years. Senator Craig Romero sponsored the legislation and was joined by Senators Don Hines, James David Cain, Donald Cravins, Reggie Dupre, Butch Gautreaux, Nick Gautreaux, Mike Michot, Willie Mount and Gerald Thuenissen, who were co-sponsors. State Representatives who also co-sponsored the bill are Gary Beard, Tim Burns, Jim Fannin, Nita Hutter, M.J. Smiley, and Karen St. Germain. The League's State Legislative Committee was actively involved in this effort.

Contact Committee Meeting

The American Sugar Cane League's Annual Contact Committee meeting was held in Thibodaux on June 29. Approximately 200 growers, processors, researchers, and friends were in attendance. I would like to thank Lawrence "Boo" Levert for chairing the meeting, along with the speakers Herman Waguespack, Jeff Hoy, Bill White, Nick Chaumont, Mike Salassi, Ryan Viator, Ben Legendre and Andy Briscoe. Your topics were very informative and interesting.

A special thank you to Windell Jackson for organizing the meeting. You did a great job on selecting the topics and selecting the speakers.

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Washington Update

By Don Wallace

Energy Conference - CAFTA
Thailand/TAFTA - WTO Ag Talks Move Slowly
USDA WASDE July Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

House and Senate leaders began a conference negotiation in early July to resolve differences between the two very different bills that were passed. These negotiations are expected to be lengthy, possibly lasting through the fiscal year ending September 30, because of the many significant differences in the two bills. On sucrose ethanol, the House bill has some funding for a pilot project in Hawaii while the Senate version expands that concept to include all of the cane states.

CAFTA

The Senate passed CAFTA in late June by a 55-46 margin, the closest Senate vote on a trade agreement in modern history. Senators Mary Landrieu and David Vitter voted in opposition to the agreement, refusing to be swayed by the Administration's attempts to sell a half-baked "sugar fix" in the eleventh hour. Please take any opportunity you may have in August to thank the Senators for their courage and leadership in this matter.

This battle, which we began nearly two years ago, has rightly been called a battle for the survival of our industry. Attention now turns to the House, which is expected to vote on the trade pact before the end of July. The pro-CAFTA forces will exert an enormous amount of pressure on House Members in the coming days and we expect them to use every dodge, every trick and every piece of leverage they can bring to bear. We urge Louisiana's House delegation to stand with our Senators on this issue of vital importance to the industry and to the state's economy.

Thailand/TAFTA

With CAFTA on the congressional front burner, the Administration hosted trade negotiators from Thailand in mid-July to discuss the elements of a US-Thailand trade agreement that we have dubbed "TAFTA." Reports from those talks indicate that the Thai negotiators have made clear that they want greater access to the U.S. sugar market, along the lines of the CAFTA precedent. Yes, while telling sugarcane and beet farmers that CAFTA will not be a template for future negotiations, the Administration has already begun the next phase of its efforts to give our markets away to foreign competitors, including the 2nd largest net exporter of sugar in the world!

WTO Ag Talks Move Slowly

The agricultural market access negotiations in Geneva continue to move slowly and the goal for an initial draft framework on modalities before August now seems to be slipping into the fall. The G-20 group of developing countries has made a market access proposal that has been endorsed as a starting point for developing the market access formula. This proposal calls for 5

tiers for developed countries, with the top tier beginning at 80 percent, and four tiers for developing countries with a much higher starting point of 130 percent. The proposal calls for progressively higher linear cuts in each tier without specifying the size of those cuts. This linear approach to tariff cuts is a compromise between the US and EU positions and seems likely to be the basis for moving forward in the autumn talks ahead of the Hong Kong ministerial later in the year.

USDA WASDE July Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its July World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. The 2004/05 production is increased by 43,000 short tons (raw value) to 8,110,000 tons, with Louisiana production estimated at 1,271,000 tons. Imports are increased by 90,000 tons due to increases in imports under the re-export program of 50,000 and Tier II imports from Mexico of 60,000. This raised total supply by 133,000 tons. The stocks-to-use ratio was raised to 14.4 percent from 13.1 percent last month.

2005/06 beginning stocks were raised to 1,476,000 tons from 1,343,000 were unchanged from May. 2004/05 beginning stocks are at 1,897,000 short tons (raw value). Total production is increased by 12,000 to 8,152,000 short tons, with beet production at 4,433,000 versus 4,370,000 last month and cane production decreased to 3,709,000 from 3,770,000 in June. Imports are unchanged at 1,591,000 tons, including TRQ imports of 1,206,000, bringing total supply to 11,074,000 tons. Exports are projected at 200,000, deliveries at 10,115,000 tons and use at 10,315,000. Total supply is 11,219,000 from 11,074,000. Ending stocks are at 904,000 tons from 759,000 in June. The stocks-to-use ratio is up slightly at 8.8 percent from 7.4 percent in June.

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On The Farm

By Windell Jackson

Top Breakage in Ho 95-988
Dedicated Research Funding Payback

Tropical storm Cindy affected a relatively small portion of the Louisiana's sugarcane industry. However, there are numerous reports of wind damage from the more southern cane-growing fields in Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes. Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist, reports observing a number of severely lodged cane fields, numerous fields with shredded canopies, and many fields that have a percentage of cane with brown leaves (possibly stalks that are broken at ground level), all from the 70 mph winds of tropical storm Cindy. However, Herman is most concerned over the amount of broken tops that he is finding on his secondary stations. Within the same field of Ho 95-988, he is reporting a wide range in the number of broken tops. In preliminary spot counts the amount of broken tops in Ho 95-988 range from less than 1% to a high of about 40%. In Point Coupee Parish, after a severe thunderstorm passed through the area, the secondary station operator is reporting numerous broken tops in Ho 95-988. It should be noted that, at this time all varieties of cane are actively growing and that all varieties have extremely tender tops. However, there does not appear to be as much top breakage in other varieties as in Ho 95-988. In an effort to see if it has a place in their farming operations, growers are urged to continue their expansion of this new variety. A red flag should be placed in the back of growers' minds that the potential for top breakage of this variety is always present even in those areas that are not normally susceptible to direct effects of tropical storms.

This year growers have a number of varieties from which to choose. LCP 85-384 is now occupying more than 90% of the state's cane acreage, and any opportunity to reduce this percentage with new varieties that equal 384's yield potential is welcomed. In addition to the older varieties that are recommended for planting in Louisiana sugarcane fields (CP 70-321, LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845, and HoCP 91-555), the industry now has enough seed of HoCP 96-540 to make a significant planting this fall. Growers are urged to take full advantage of this new variety. In outfield tests its sugar per acre has been equal to or better than LCP 85-384's, plus its erectness and harvestability are better. Additionally there is a limited amount of seed available for planting of L 97-128 and Ho 95-988. It is recommended that these varieties should be increased as much as possible. If the acreage of LCP 85-384 can be reduced, perhaps in the future the rust levels will be reduced and once again, it will become a high yielding and

useful variety. Most growers realize that at least for the next three to four years LCP 85-384 will still have a major impact on this industry and that its maximum yield potential must be maintained by planting quality disease free seed.

Dedicated Research Funding Payback

Each year a portion of the League's dues collected from Louisiana's growers and processors are set aside to support research. The research supported by these funds is in addition to the research that is directly funded from the American Sugar Cane League's annual budget. Each year scientists request funding for research projects on sugarcane breeding, production practices, factory-processing studies, and alternate uses for sugar and its byproducts. These requests are submitted to the Dedicated Funding Research Committee for review. The committee suggests levels at which each project should be supported. These suggestions on funding are then submitted to the full board for their approval or not. It is not often that research gives such a quick and immediate return as is demonstrated in the following paragraphs.

Dr. Gillian Eggleston is a member of the Southern Regional Research Center, USDA-ARS, New Orleans, LA research staff. Dr. Eggleston has been very successful in her factory research, receiving numerous awards and commendations. Additionally, she has been successful in obtaining several Dedicated Funding Committee grants. Dr. Eggleston recently was nominated for a citation for successfully transferring intermediate and hot lime clarification processes to the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry. The following are excerpts from Dr. Eggleston's justification for the citation:

Successful Transfer of Intermediate and Hot Lime Clarification Processes to the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry

The intermediate and hot lime clarification technology was urgently needed to overcome the higher amounts of impurities being delivered to factories. This was because in the early 1990s a new sugarcane variety LCP 85-384 was introduced into Louisiana. The new variety was high yielding, but lodged (fell down) easily. Soldier harvesters were incapable of harvesting the severely lodged sugarcane. Combine harvesters (billet harvesters) that could harvest the lodged cane were soon harvesting the majority of the commercial sugarcane fields in Louisiana. However, with the increase in acreage harvested with chopper harvesters there has been a parallel increase in impurities being delivered with the billeted cane to the factory, which has made processing more difficult. At the same time, pressure from public and environmental agencies caused a reduction in sugarcane burning, which has also meant that even more green (unburnt) impurities were being delivered to the factory. These extra impurities have particularly put an extra burden on the clarification stage of processing, which is mainly responsible for removing impurities from the cane juice. Dr. Eggleston, early on in her factory research, brought to the attention of the processors the fact that the traditional cold lime clarification process operated by the majority of Louisiana sugarcane factories was unable to cope with these extra impurities and a new process was urgently needed.

The major challenge in transferring the technology was getting a very conservative industry to change a process they had been using for many decades. These were overcome by conducting large factory studies where hundreds of samples were analyzed, by alerting the industry to the problems with the traditional process, by showing the technological improvements and monetary savings gained by adopting the new technology, and by directly including industry in the research.

The technology was transferred effectively by working closely with three sugarcane factories in Louisiana and gaining the support of the American Sugar Cane League. By working closely with processors, particularly Duane Legendre and Adrian Monge, the research was immediately transferred at the factories where the research was conducted. The staffs at the factories at which the research was conducted saw "first hand" the multiple benefits from the improved clarification technology. The technology was successfully transferred to 92% of all Louisiana factories by 2005, mostly through presentations, publications, and "word of mouth"

throughout the industry. This research effort was mostly funded by ARS, with grant support from the American Sugar Cane League in the form of two full grants worth $30,000. New equipment for the installation of the hot lime clarification process at Cora Texas factory was paid for by the factory.

After three large and complex seasonal factory studies were completed, from 1999-2005, 92% of Louisiana factories have adopted intermediate or hot lime clarification processes. Only one factory in Louisiana still operates cold lime clarification. Nine LA factories have adopted hot lime clarification over cold lime clarification, one adopted hot lime clarification over intermediate liming, and two have adopted intermediate lime clarification over cold lime clarification. Furthermore, U.S. Sugars factory in Florida adopted hot liming technology over cold lime clarification. Sugar refineries and ultimately the consumer have also benefited from this technology transfer. The raw sugar quality is better when intermediate or hot lime clarification processes are operated and it is easier and less costly to refine. The refined sugar is also of higher quality for the consumer. Sugarcane growers have benefited as well because the increased profits of the factory are shared with the growers.

The reasons for the success of this research is that both intermediate and hot liming processes have much better clarifying efficiency and control than cold liming, as well as more impurity removal and less sucrose (end product) losses. Sucrose loss savings alone offered by intermediate over cold liming save one sugarcane factory an estimated $123,000 per year. Loss savings are even better with hot liming at $283,000 per year, and these are conservative estimates. The total savings per year in Louisiana because of this transferred technology is estimated at $2,700,000 in sucrose loss savings alone (this is based on the price of raw sugar at 20 cents per lb). Furthermore, hot liming technology was shown to have the additional advantage of approximately 20% less factory consumption of lime than for both intermediate and cold lime clarification. At an approximate cost of $90 per ton of lime, it is conservatively estimated that one factory adopting hot lime technology will save $12,000 in reduced lime consumption per year. As 9 factories in Louisiana adopted hot lime technology, at least $108,000 is being saved per year in the Louisiana industry. Therefore, current total savings in Louisiana per year are, conservatively, $2,808,000, and this does not include other savings costs such as less scaling in evaporator tubes, less cleaning required (90% less chemicals are needed to clean heat exchangers), and improvement of clarified juice and raw sugar quality.

With increasingly more pressure from the public and environmental agencies to further reduce and even curtail the burning of sugarcane, the adopted clarification technologies will help to offset the processing problems associated with the extra impurities delivered with unburnt sugarcane.

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The Baton Rouge Line

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

Third Axle Mandate Delayed Two Years

The recently adjourned legislative session enacted a bill which will delay the implementation of the third axle requirement on trailers hauling sugar cane to give farmers, mills and haulers a little breathing room to figure out the best way to approach the situation. Senate bill 141 by Senator Romero (R - New Iberia) began its struggle through the legislative process as an outright repeal of the League sponsored law which would require haulers to add an extra axle to their trailers by 2008 or revert to carrying only 86,000 lbs.

Sen. Romero, citing the loss of two mills in his district and soaring transportation costs, coaxed the Senate to repeal the expensive third axle law. He felt the sugar industry was under more stress than at any time in recent history and that the public would be sympathetic enough to support his proposal. Even though the bill gained approval from the Senate Transportation Committee, it drew two votes in opposition including the Chairman of the committee Sen. Noble Ellington (D - Winnsboro). Ellington is a staunch supporter of agriculture but pointed out that sugarcane loads at 100,000 pounds with the current configuration of axles were destroying the roads.

With pressure from Senators who wanted to help, but had overriding concerns about the highways, and with support and encouragement from the Governor and from Congressman Charlie Melancon, Romero amended his bill to move the deadline for the third axle from 2008 to 2010.

Department of Transportation officials and State Police did not take an active role in the bill as it worked its way through the legislature, but were relieved to see it amended from a repeal to a "stay of execution" type law. The League is well respected by those agencies for taking the responsible position on the issue and being proactive in passing the original bill several years ago.

Before the bill was scheduled for its original hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee, Sen. Romero met with the League's State Legislative Committee, chaired by grower Price Gay of Iberville Parish, to seek the League's support for his bill. The committee could not come to a consensus. Some felt the third axle law was too expensive and came at the worst possible time for the industry. Others felt that the Legislature would take away our permit for 100,000 pounds because of the damage to the roads and that it would be almost impossible for most growers to survive at 86,000 pounds and that the third axle was our best chance to survive. No position was taken.

The League, however, quickly signed on to the amended version and went to work to convince legislators of the need to do this.

Once the bill got to the House of Representatives, Representative Karen St. Germain (D-Plaquemine) took over the guidance of the measure and things went smoothly through the House Transportation Committee with no votes cast against the bill. The floor of the House proved

to be another matter. When the bill came up for a vote Rep. Taylor Townsend (D - Nachitoches) attacked the bill pointing out that sugar has weight limit privileges which other commodities do not have and suggested that he wanted amendments added to the bill to allow "other folks" to enjoy the 100,000 permit. St. Germain temporarily stalled the vote so that Rep. Townsend's concerns could be examined. Townsend willingly relented on his amendments and seemed happy that he had made his point.

Finally the bill was enacted and has become Act 330.

U.S. Department of Labor Working With the American Sugar Cane League to Increase Compliance with Federal Labor Laws

The New Orleans District Office of the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is working with the American Sugar Cane League to improve compliance with the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA).

The MSPA protects migrant and seasonal agricultural workers by establishing employment standards related to wages, housing, transportation, disclosure and recordkeeping. MSPA also requires farm labor contractors to register with the U.S. Department of Labor.

The agency's strategy for improving compliance includes education such as the mailing of fact sheets, participation in seminars with employers, and conducting investigations. The agency plans on conducting housing inspections in the Louisiana sugar cane industry this year.

When WHD finds violations, it works with the sugar cane farmer or processor to explain the law and how to comply in the future.

For more information about the MSPA, you can contact the New Orleans District Office at (504) 589-6171. Information is also available on the Internet at www.wagehour.dol.gov.

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Environmental Perspective

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

AIR STAGNATION

Webster's defines stagnation as a condition without motion, not flowing or moving. Lower atmosphere stagnation causes air pollutants, both natural and man-made, to accumulate, sometimes to an unpleasant and/or unhealthy level as defined by National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). In southern Louisiana, atmospheric stability conditions occur most often in the period May through October, jeopardizing compliance with the NAAQS for photochemical oxidants (ozone) and particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) especially during that period. Predicted or observed weather problems with air stagnation is the basis for determining when and how farmers may conduct controlled cane field burning so as to prevent unacceptable smoke (particulate matter) concentrations in the ambient air. Thus, cane field burning should be conducted only by trained and currently certified smoke managers in order to avoid severe legal and public relations consequences.

Now, at the beginning of the "dog days" of summer, the ozone NAAQS problem is at the forefront. With longer daily sunshine to "cook" any build-up of ozone precursor pollutants such as turpenes emitted by pine and live oak trees, and automobile exhaust, violation of the ozone standard occurs most often. Ozone standard "non-compliance" in the Baton Rouge area is a subject often discussed here. The effect of such non-compliance status is higher motor fuel prices, high costs of special motor vehicle inspections and maintenance, loss of federal transportation funds, and increased costs and restrictions on air emissions permits. Actually, the ozone situation in southern Louisiana may be deteriorating. *The Advocate* (of Baton Rouge) on July 16, 2005, quotes a Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) official reporting on ozone detected at an ambient air quality monitoring site in Kenner "is dangerously close" to violation of the new eight-hour NAAQS for ozone. Only "two more readings of 84 parts per billion or greater this year will push the three year average above 85" and place the whole metropolitan area of New Orleans into "non-compliance," and subject to the same or more severe restrictions as now imposed in the Baton Rouge vicinity.

The developing ozone problems in the New Orleans vicinity does not speak well of the national, state and local systems and efforts to achieve and maintain NAAQS compliance. When NAAQS were first established in the early 1960s, New Orleans and about 80 percent of the contiguous 48 states was in "non-attainment" of the ozone standard. However, by 1980 the New Orleans area had been brought into compliance with the ozone standard (and other NAAQS as well) by reducing or eliminating excessive industrial emissions, especially major hydrocarbon emission sources in the Avondale-Norco vicinity upriver from Kenner. Of course, EPA's then nascent program requiring emission control systems in new automobiles may have helped somewhat, but the point is that an ozone standard that is more stringent than the one in effect today was achieved within the deadlines established in the Clean Air Act.

In the quarter century subsequent to NAAQS achievement at New Orleans, there has been an enormous expenditure of public and private funds

[Continued on page 16]

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(Continued from page 13) and efforts to further improve ambient air quality, including the establishment of LDEQ in 1985. These more recent efforts in the New Orleans area were directed specifically at further reducing ozone precursor emissions from industrial plants, storage tanks, gasoline stations, automobiles, and consumer products such as paint. In spite of all this painful and expensive effort since 1980, the New Orleans area is now on the verge of violating an ozone standard that is considerably more lenient than the ozone standard that was in effect in 1980. All this expense and trouble for 25 years and the situation is now worse? Could it possibly be that the whole "ozone" control system is another environmental scam?

The Kenner monitoring problem is not one of concern exclusively to urban areas. When non-compliance occurs, a wide geographic area surrounding the offending monitoring station is subject to restrictions simply because precursors and ozone itself can be dispersed over a wide area by wind currents. The "Baton Rouge" non-compliance area, for instance, covers all of Ascension, Iberville and West Baton Rouge parishes including all of the farms and sugar mills therein. No one knows for sure what specific geographic area will be declared "non-attainment" should what now seems inevitable occur at Kenner, but there are numerous sugar cane farms and three sugar mills located within 40 miles of the City of Kenner. Beware!

Actually, the term "air stagnation" is a metaphor for the entire environmental perspective at this time. A Federal energy bill has (again) passed both houses and House-Senate conferees appointed to resolve conflicts. The House Bill contains provisions to protect manufacturers of MTBE from product liability lawsuits whereas the Senate Bill purports to tap these deep pockets to pay the costs for remediating environmental damage caused by others mishandling or spilling the product. This same situation occurred in the last session of Congress, and no compromise could be reached then, and many doubt that a passable bill will now be forthcoming. No positive movement on the energy bill can be described as "stagnation."

Action on a number of other national environmental issues is being held up by environmentalists lawsuits, i.e., more environmental stagnation. That's the "perspective."

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Timing of Application of Glyphosate to Maximize Sugar per Acre and Possible Alternatives to the Use of Glyphosate in Enhancing the Yield of Sugar of Louisiana Sugarcane in 2004

Benjamin Legendre[1], Kenneth Gravois[1], Keith Bischoff[1], and Jim Griffin[2]
[1]LSU AgCenter, St. Gabriel Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA.
[2]LSU AgCenter, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management, Baton Rouge, LA

In two field experiments, the same chemical ripener treatments were applied to adjacent fields of LCP 85-384 in the plant-cane crop on August 28 (Test I) and September 14 (Test II), 2004, in water at a broadcast rate of 8 gal./A with a CO_2 sprayer and hand-held boom. The fields had been cultivated and fertilized according to recommended practices; insecticides were applied as required to control the sugarcane borer. Each experiment consisted of 14 treatments: Polado-L® (glyphosate, N-(phosphonomethyl)glycine, in the form of its isopropylamine salt manufactured by Monsanto Technology LLC) at 4, 6 and 8 oz. of the formulated product per acre (0.1250, 0.1875 and 0.2500 lb. ae/A, respectively), Roundup WeatherMAX® (glyphosate, N-(phosphonomethyl)glycine, in the form of its potassium salt manufactured by Monsanto Technology LLC) at 3.6, 5.3 and 7.1 oz. of the formulated product per acre (0.1250, 0.1875 and 0.2500 lb. ae/A, respectively), Touchdown iQ® (glyphosate, N-(phosphonomethyl)glycine, in the form of its diammonium salt manufactured by Syngenta) at 5.30, 6.65, 8.00 and 10.70 oz. of the formulated product per acre (0.1250, 0.1562, 0.1875 and 0.2500 lb. ae/A, respectively), Palisade® (trinexapac-ethyl manufactured by Syngenta) at 0.223, 0.267 and 0.312 lb. ai/A and an untreated check serving as a control. A nonionic surfactant, Induce® (0.25% v/v)(Helena), was added to all spray solutions of Polado-L only. A 36-inch band was sprayed over sugarcane foliage so that most of the leaves were wet by the spray. Plots in each of the two experiments were one-row (6 ft.) by 50 ft. long with a 5-foot alley and with buffer rows on either side of treated row, arranged in a randomized complete block design with three replications. All plots of the two experiments were ultimately harvested green by combine at 56 days after treatment for both experiments. The mulch residue remained on the fields after harvest.

From each plot of the two experiments, fifteen-stalk samples were taken at random along the row at 28, 42 and 56 days after treatment (DAT). Stalks were stripped of all leaves and topped approximately 4-6 inches below the apical meristem (bud). Following hand sampling at 56 DAT, each plot was harvested by a cane combine (Cameco Model 2500) operating at approximately 3.5 mph and an extractor fan speed of 950 rpm. All cane from each plot was weighed in the wagon equipped with load cells and the weights recorded. Data collected and/or calculated from each plot included millable stalks per acre prior to sampling and for each date of sampling, mean stalk weight (MSW), mean stalk length (MSL), estimated tons of cane per acre (TC/A)(MSW multiplied by millable stalk count/A and divided by 2000), Brix by refractometer, sucrose by polarimetry, purity (the ratio of sucrose to Brix), the yield of theoretical recoverable sugar per ton of cane (TRS/TC) and yield of sugar per acre (S/A)(TC/A multiplied by TRS/TC) . From weighed plots, the yield of tons cane per acre (TC/A) was calculated adjusted to the plot size. All values for TC/A, whether estimated or weighed, were adjusted downward by applying a factor of 0.86 as a deduction for trash content. Plots were rated for regrowth potential (shoot number and uniformity of shoots on the row) in Test I only on November 16, 2004 using a rating scale of 1-9 with 1 representing excellent and uniform stands and 9 representing very poor and irregular stands.

Data were analyzed using the Proc Mixed Procedure of the SAS (v 8.2) software package. Data were balanced and least square means were calculated. Mean separation was accomplished by the PDIFF option (P = 0.05).

Both experiments had identical treatments with the only difference being that the second application of those treatments was deferred by one month (September 14 vs. August 18). Post-harvest sampling dates were the same for the two experiments at 28, 42 and 56 DAT. When averaging across all treatments and dates of sampling or harvesting, there was a significant increase of 1,928 lb. (8784 vs. 6856 lb.) of S/A in favor of the later treatment date, September 14. This would indicate that the Louisiana sugarcane industry could significantly increase its overall yield of S/A by delaying harvest by one month in keeping with the historical startup date of October 15. Further, by delaying the harvest by one month and averaging across all treatments and dates of sampling, TC/A and TRS/TC would be increased by 4.2 tons and 29 lb., respectively. Mean stalk length (MSL) and mean stalk weight (MSW) would also be increased by 8.7 in. and 0.27 lb., respectively by delaying the harvest by one month. There were similar trends when comparing each treatment independently for the two treatment dates and averaging over the three sampling dates.

Further, when applying any of the formulations of glyphosate tested in August, the treatment-to-harvest interval should be shortened to 28 to 42 days after treatment (DAT) to insure maximizing the yield of sugar per acre (S/A). Although there is still a loss of yield of tons cane per acre (TC/A) associated with glyphosate treatments at 28 or 42 DAT, the increase in the yield of theoretical recoverable sugar per ton of cane (TRS/TC) more than compensated for the loss of TC/A. However, with the early application date, by delaying harvest beyond 42 DAT could possibly reduce overall S/A when compared to untreated cane even though the increase in TRS/TC exceeded 50 lb. The overall reduction in S/A is caused by the significant reduction in TC/A associated with the glyphosate treatment. However, it appeared that by delaying glyphosate treatments by one month to September 14, it is more likely that S/A will be significantly increased regardless of the post-harvest interval. These experiments support the current recommendations that glyphosate be applied to LCP 85-384 at the equivalent rate of 0.1875 lb. ae/A (same as the 6 oz. per acre rate of Polado-L). Lower rates (equivalent to 4 oz. per acre rate of Polado-L) were not as effective in increasing overall sugar per acre while higher rates (equivalent to 8 or 10 oz per acre rates of Polado-L) appeared excessive and may result in actual lowering of overall S/A, especially for the variety LCP 85-384.

This experiment also indicated that more studies should be conducted with Palisade, especially at the higher rates. Palisade treatments generally increased TRS/TC without reducing TC/A as much as seen with most of the glyphosate treatments although it appeared that a longer treatment-harvest interval is required with Palisade when compared to the glyphosate treatments.

The regrowth ratings for the higher rates of glyphosate were significantly different from those of Palisade in Test I indicating that Palisade had a lesser impact upon immediate regrowth than glyphosate at one month after harvesting. On the other hand, there were no differences in the regrowth ratings between the control plots and the three rates of Palisade.

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2004.

Research Title: Filtrate Clarification *Lead Scientist: Luis Bento, Audubon Sugar Institute, LSU AgCenter*

Juice clarification is an important step in cane sugar production. Suspended solids and some dissolved compounds are separated from mixed juice forming a mud that is de-sweetened in vacuum filters. The filtrate, representing about 20% of mixed juice, is normally returned to the mixed juice tank, before clarification. The reason for this return is the high turbidity and suspended solids content in filtrate. To avoid this return, a further clarification must be done, in order to obtain a clear solution. This can be done using a flotation clarification system.

During 2004 the following tasks were undertaken:

- lab tests were done with filtrate using different flocculants at different pH conditions;
- a flotation clarifier using a pilot plant sediment clarifier existing at Audubon Sugar Institute was designed;
- filtrate clarification tests on a pilot plant scale were performed in a mill.

Lab tests were performed using 800 ml of filtrate. After aeration with a high speed mixer, polymers were added and mixing was maintained at 30 rpm. After 30 seconds, mixing was stopped and flotation characteristics were evaluated. All the tests were done without pH adjustment (pH 6.3). Increasing the pH with lime did not improve the clarification. The best result was observed with a mixture of 15 ppm of a cationic flocculant and 3 ppm of an anionic flocculant. With this mixture, a good floc was formed that rose completely to the liquid surface and a turbidity of 137 NTU was attained in the clear filtrate.

This mixture of flocculants was used in the pilot plant trial and a turbidity in the clear filtrate between 131 and 229 NTU (average 185 NTU) was obtained. This is almost as good as the clarified juice turbidity.

Research Title: Sugar Factory Equipment Evaluation *Lead Scientist: Harold Birkett and Jeanie Stein, Audubon Sugar Institute, LSU AgCenter*

This was the final year of the evaluation of pans, crystallizers and reheaters. In 2004 data was gathered on all aspects of this project with primary emphasis on massecuite reheater operations.

Operating parameters, purity rise and heat transfer coefficients were determined for Honiron (Bosch), Fletcher Smith and Stevens coil reheaters. Results show that the heat transfer coefficient achieved by the moving element reheater (Stevens) was about three times higher than for the stationary reheater types, 9.8 versus 3.3 Btu/(hr.ft^2.°F), respectively. Also of note is that even relatively high reheating water temperatures (160-167°F) resulted in relatively small purity rises.

The purity rise across the reheater for all of the reheaters tested ranged from -1 to 3.4 purity points. The average purity rise (1.2 points) is double that measured for the larger, newer reheaters (0.5 points). Most Louisiana factories lack adequate massecuite reheating equipment, with the existing equipment at most factories being too small to achieve the required degree of massecuite

reheating without excessively high reheating water temperatures. Further, there is great scope for improving C centrifugal operation, where the purity rise is often excessive.

In conclusion, overall results for the life of the project (2001-2004) show that the high grade continuous and batch pan results were comparable. The C continuous pans achieved slightly higher crystal yields (and purity drops) than the batch pans. Vertical and Blanchard crystallizer results were also comparable. The large stationary massecuite reheaters (finned tube type) yielded comparable mother liquor purity rises to the smaller Stevens coil type reheater.

The manner in which equipment is operated was found to be more important than the type of equipment installed.

Research Title: Direct Production of White Sugar *Lead Scientist: Peter Rein, Luis Bento, Bruce Ellis, Audubon Sugar Institute, LSU AgCenter*

Raw sugar produced in Louisiana mills is of good quality with a low color. Thus suitable treatment of clarified juice can lead to the production of sugars for direct human consumption.

The proposed production scheme includes various adsorbents to purify the juice prior to evaporation, syrup clarification, crystallization, centrifugation, drying and screening. In the first part of this study done last year, a pilot column run at St James mill gave encouraging results, suggesting that direct production of white sugar is feasible for Louisiana. The production of edible sugars directly in sugar mills is an opportunity to diversify mill production with high added-value products. For a mill processing 1 million ton cane /yr, the potential benefit in terms of increased revenue is considered to be 3c/lb sugar, or $6 million/yr.

The pilot plant project involved installing a dosing tank, a packed column and a small evaporator at the St James sugar mill. After the dosing tank, the juice passed through the packed bed. The juice to be concentrated was then collected in a holding tank and later concentrated in a small evaporator.

Decolorization of clarified juice varied depending on experimental conditions, but a level of over 80% decolorization was achieved over extended periods. Crystallization tests are to be performed on syrup, which was concentrated and collected using the evaporator. Approximately 20 gallons of syrup were collected which will enable ion exchange work and other treatments to be performed on the product at a later stage.

Low temperature regenerations were used to regenerate the column. The regenerations were performed every 7-10 days. The cleaning stages included a high up-flow water wash, and various chemical washes. Various concentrations and flow-rates were tried during the regenerations as well as different regenerant temperatures.

Research Title: C Centrifugal Performance *Lead Scientist: Luis Bento, Audubon Sugar Institute, LSU AgCenter*

Centrifugation of C massecuite is an important operation in sugar processing. Incorrect operation increases the sugar content in final molasses and, consequently overall sugar losses increase.

In the first part of this project, a C centrifugal survey was performed. After analyzing the results of this survey, it was concluded that the centrifugals with best results, that is, with lowest difference between true and target molasses purity, have the following characteristics:

- Centrifugal: motor power 50 hp; basket speed > 2,100 rpm; basket diameter 37 "; central feeding;
- Screens: % of open area 8% - 14.4%; hole dimensions 0.06 x 1.65 mm, 0.06 x 2.2 mm, 0.089 x 2.1 mm
- Operating conditions: massecuite washing with water + steam on feeding and on screen; screen washing every 24 hours; screen replacement once / crop

During the campaign, an inspection was made in almost all the mills. An important finding was the fact that the massecuite temperature at the feed point of each machine was not the same. A variation of 10°F was observed in some mills. Also the residence time of the massecuite in the centrifugal distributor is not the same, being shorter at the feed end and longer at the opposite end. As a consequence, crystal size was observed to vary from 640 ìm at the feed end to 260 ìm at the opposite end. A difference of around one degree of purity was observed in the respective molasses (this purity is also influenced by the wash water quantity in each machine). In some mills the massecuite in the distributor is heated by hot water in coils. Counter-current water flow aggravates this situation.

Consequences of this are: sucrose is melted to molasses; small crystals can pass through the screen to molasses; small crystals can block centrifugal screens; centrifugal performance will decrease and sugar losses in molasses increase.

Research Title: Microwave Heating of C Massecuite *Lead Scientist: Luis Bento, Peter Rein, Audubon Sugar Institute, LSU AgCenter and Cristina Sabliov, Dorin Boldor, Dept of Biological Eng, LSU*

After cooling, C massecuite must be heated before centrifuging. This operation must be quick and well controlled to avoid sugar dissolution in molasses. Microwave technology can make this operation more efficient. Massecuite can be heated in minutes whereas with classic re-heating a residence time around one hour is used. In addition heating is expected to be uniform without localized overheating.

During 2004, some tests with an artificial massecuite were done at North Carolina State University. A massecuite was prepared using a mixture of raw sugar, dextrose and molasses. Dextrose was used to attain the normal C massecuite purity. Three tests were run with the 5 kW microwave equipment. For test trials two and three, the massecuite Brix was lowered to decrease the viscosity of the product, to increase its flow rate, and to reduce the stress on the pump that was used in this study.

It was observed that microwave heating does not alter significantly the characteristics of the massecuite. In the first trial, between 8 and 18 minutes after the start, a stable condition was obtained with massecuite temperatures averaging 65°C and feed temperatures varying from 43 to 47°C. A net power of 500 watts was used in this period and a difference of 4°C within the massecuite was registered. After 18 minutes, the power applied was lowered to 400 watts, in order to decrease the outlet temperature. A mean temperature of 56°C in outlet massecuite was observed. After 33 minutes, the power was increased to 600 watts and outlet temperatures increased to between 80 and 90°C.

For the second trial, the Brix was lowered to 92° and flows increased to 21 liter/hour. In the first part of this trial, with 1,000 watts power applied, outlet massecuite temperatures ranged from 35 to 60°C. In this period the temperature difference in the massecuite (outside – center) varied from 10 to 20°C. In the second part of this trial, power was increased to 2.2 kW, feed temperature was increased 35 – 38°C and outlet temperature varied between 55 and 85°C. A temperature difference of 25°C was observed.

In the third trial, two flow rates and two power levels were tried: 32 l/h at 2.2 kW; 42 l/h at 2.2 kW and 42 l/h at 4 kW. Massecuite feed temperatures were maintained between 35 and 36°C. In this trial the following outlet temperatures were observed: Low flow, low power: 60 – 70°C; high flow, low power: ± 50°C.

The following conclusions can be drawn:

- Rapid microwave heating can be used to re-heat C massecuites after cooling.
- Microwave heating does not significantly alter massecuite characteristics.
- A uniform temperature distribution in the massecuite can be achieved
- Temperature change in the massecuite is very sensitive to power changes.

Research Title: Filter Stations and Microbial Control *Lead Scientist: Donal F. Day, Audubon Sugar Institute, Louisiana State University AgCenter*

Efficient operation of a sugar factory requires knowledge of the locations of sugar loss within the operation. Minimization of these losses is increasingly important with decreased prices for sugar. A loss point that tends to be overlooked is the filter station. Sugar loss may appear as a purity drop between the mixed juice and the filtrate and or an increase in lactic acid levels from the mixed juice as well as pol loss to filter cake. Routine proper operation in Louisiana generally achieves pol in filter cake of 2% or less. Results from 2003 indicated that microbial generation will not occur at the filters if they are operating properly with the mud kept above 160°F. Filtrate return clarification work was conducted in conjunction with Dr. L. Bento in 2004.

The filter operations of all the Louisiana factories were monitored in 2004. The following parameters were checked for Good Operating Practices; drum speed rpm, high and low vacuums, cake thickness and adequate water sprayers. Bagacillo shortage was not a general problem this season. The table summarizes the results by mill, in no particular order.

Mill	Speed (rpm)	Pressure	Sprayers	Cake thickness	Pol % filter cake
1	+	+	-	+	nd
2	+	-	-	+	4.4
3	+	+	+	+	2.6
4	+	+	+	+	2.1
5	-	+/-	+	+	nd
6	+	+	+	+	2.3
7	-	+	-	+	5.9
8	-	-	-	+	6.0
9	-	-	+	-	4.1
10	+	+	-	+	6.0
11	+	+	-	-	4.2
12	-	-	-	-	10.4
13	+	?	+	+	3.0
14	+	-	+	-	5.5
15	-	+	+/-	+	4.3

Pol in filter cake between 2 and 3% was readily achieved this season, in Louisiana, when the filter station was operated properly. On average, if any one of these factors were not correct the pol in filter cake doubled. If all were incorrect, it doubled again.

Research Title: Anatomy of a Natural Born Killer *Lead Scientist: William H. White, Research Entomologist*

Insects are important pests of sugarcane in Louisiana. Their feeding results in direct yield losses in both the field and factory. Applying insecticides to reduce these losses are an important source of growers' yearly inputs and some insects are vectors of important diseases that further reduce yields. Pest management in Louisiana has been practiced for many years to control season-long infestations of the sugarcane borer. No pest management tactics for aphids (yellow sugarcane aphid and the

sugarcane aphid) have been established. In 2004, the American Sugar Cane League funded our project – Insect Rearing: An Indispensable Tool for Successful Pest Management. The two tactics of pest management that we have primarily focused on have been plant resistance and biological control. Insect rearing is an important component to conducting research for both tactics. In 2004 45,000 borer pupae were produced. These pupae produced an estimated sixteen million sugarcane borer larvae. These larvae were used in field screening of seedlings, first-line trials, parent evaluations, and replicated yield trials in our recurrent selection for sugarcane borer resistance. In 2004 we identified three new elite borer resistant parental lines for crossing in both the LSU and USDA commercial breeding programs. All borer resistant parental lines have been introduced into the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas for evaluation for cross-resistance to the Mexican rice borer and in studies in marker assisted selection. We found the potential new variety L 99-226 to be resistant to the sugarcane borer for the second year in our yield reduction study. However, greenhouse studies using greenhouse cultured sugarcane aphids indicated that L 99-226 was one of the most susceptible varieties to that aphid. We initiated work to do larval descriptions of Killers also in 2004. Specimens of second and third instar larvae were collected and pupae were reared in the laboratory. Eggs and first-instar larvae have yet to be collected.

I. Appendix

Figure 1. Late instar Killer Larvae

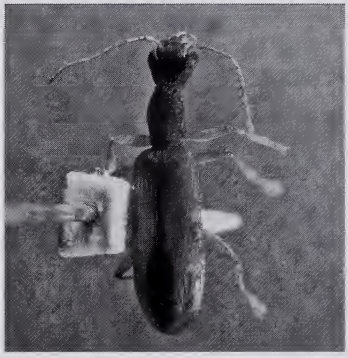

Figure 2. Adult Killer

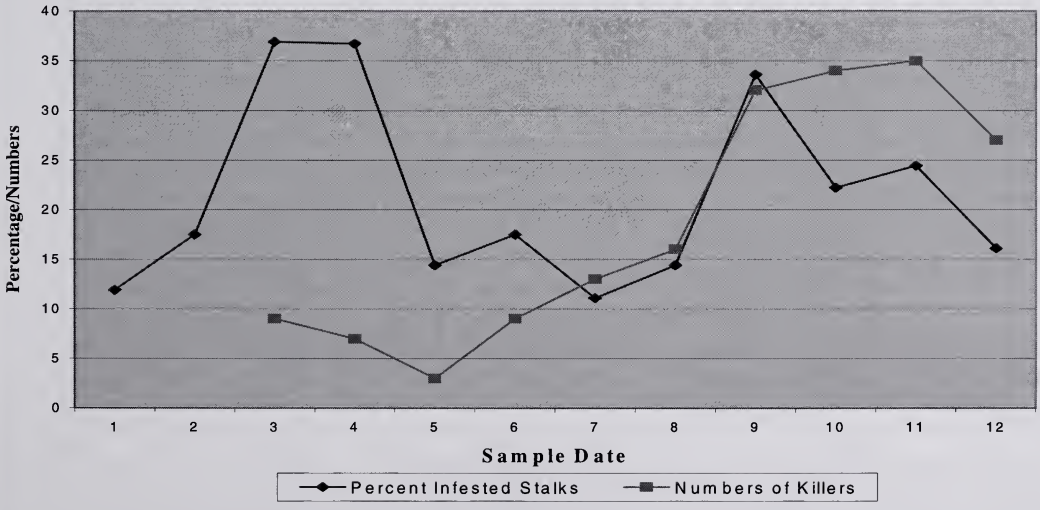

Figure 3. Weekly percent infested stalks from untreated plots of the yield reduction study and average number of Killers per untreated plot. Yield Reduction Study, 2004.

Research Title: Support for the USDA-ARS Juice Quality Laboratory *Lead Scientist: Edward P. Richard, Jr., USDA - ARS, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

To insure the existence of this industry from the threats of foreign competition will require that sugar yields continue to increase and input costs are reduced. The USDA-ARS's Sugarcane Research Laboratory's Juice Quality Lab located at its Ardoyne Research Farm plays a vital role in the development of the information needed by agency, university, and private researchers to assess varietal and treatment implications on factors that influence theoretically recoverable sugar levels and ultimately per acre sugar yields. During the 2004 harvest season, the lab processed 9,780 samples with 6,030 (62%) of the samples being subjected to the prebreaker/press method of analysis to get a better idea of variety/treatment effects on the juice components that affect sugar recovery (Table 1). In addition, data obtained from the various sampling dates of the maturity, ripener, and cold tolerance studies are assimilated and distributed to growers, processors, extension specialists, and consultants via email to assist them in making timely management decisions.

Table 1. Five-year summary of samples processed through the Sugarcane Research Laboratory's Juice Quality Lab. 2000-2004.

Year	Roller Mill	Prebreaker/Press	Total
2000	4,284	1,599 (27%)	5,883
2001	3,561	2,149 (38%)	5,710
2002	3,130	3,351 (52%)	6,481
2003	3,330	4,000 (55%)	7,330
2004	3,757	6,027 (62%)	9,784
Average	3,612	3,425 (49%)	7,040

Table 2. User Scientists, number of analyses, and percent of total samples processed through the Sugarcane Research Laboratory's juice quality lab during the 2004 harvest season.

		Roller mill		Prebreaker/press		Total	
Scientist	Affiliation	No. of analyses	%	No. of analyses	%	No. of analyses	%
Tew, T.	ARS, Houma	1393	37.1	822	13.6	2215	22.6
Veremis, J.	ARS, Houma	21	0.6	1354	22.5	1375	14.1
Pan, Y-B.	ARS, Houma	0	0	2	0	2	0
Garrison, D.[1]	ARS, Houma	592	15.8	0	0	592	6.1
Dufrene, E.	ARS, Houma	537	14.3	168	2.8	705	7.2
White, W.	ARS, Houma	72	1.9	213	3.5	285	2.9
Viator, R.	ARS, Houma	286	7.6	763	12.7	1049	10.7
Johnson, R.	ARS, Houma	0	0	641	10.6	641	6.6
Grisham, M.	ARS, Houma	0	0	474	7.9	474	4.8
Richard, E.[2]	ARS, Houma	856	22.8	1328	22.0	2184	22.3
Cobill, R.[3]	ARS, Houma	0	0	244	4.0	244	2.5
Viator, B.	Viator & Assoc.	0	0	18	0.3	18	0.2
Total		3757	38.4	6027	61.6	9784	100.0

[1]Outfield tests conducted in cooperation with LAES and ASCL scientists.

[2]Includes maturity, ripener, and freeze tests conducted in cooperation with LAES scientists (B. Legendre and H. Birkett.[3]Includes cooperative research with J. Flynn (Kleentek) and Mary An Godshall (SPRI).

Research Title: Examination of Aluminum Compounds for Clarification and Decolorization of Cane Juice *Lead Scientist: Mary An Godshall, Marianne McKee, Sara Moore and Ron Triche Sugar Processing Research Institute, Inc., New Orleans, LA*

The objective of this study was to evaluate aluminum compounds, known as coagulants, for removal of turbidity, color and polysaccharides from cane juice during clarification.

Experimental: Raw mixed cane juice was obtained from a nearby mill and treated with heat, lime, a commercial flocculent and five commercial polyaluminum compounds that are used in water purification (designated Al-1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The aluminum coagulants were added in the range of 100-200 ppm.

Results showed that all of the aluminum compounds significantly increased the removal of color, turbidity and polysaccharide compared to the regular clarification process, which consisted of heat, lime and flocculent. Heating mixed juice alone removed, on average, 15% color, 85% turbidity and 27.5% polysaccharides. The traditional clarification process using heat, lime and flocculent, removed an average of 34% color, 97% turbidity and 35% polysaccharides. Supplementation of clarification with aluminum coagulants resulted in 51.2-75.5% color removal, 97.5-98.8% turbidity removal and 43.5-56.4% removal of polysaccharides. These results indicate that addition of polyaluminum coagulants in clarification has the potential for a doubling of color removal, 61% increase in polysaccharide removal and 2% improvement in turbidity removal.

A test for aluminum in the treated cane juice samples showed low levels of residual aluminum, ranging from 0.41 ppm in juice treated with Al-4 to 2.07 ppm in juice treated with Al-2. The untreated cane juice had 31.9 ppm aluminum.

Research Title: Economic Analysis of Sugarcane Production in Louisiana *Lead scientist: Michael E. Salassi, Professor, Dept. of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, LSU Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA*

Projected sugarcane production costs for 2004 were estimated at $445 per farm acre for production through harvest of third stubble. These costs include expenses for fallow field operations, seedbed preparation, planting, plantcane and stubble crop field operations and harvest. General farm overhead expenses were estimated at $77 per acre. Based on average yields in the range of 30 to 35 tons per acre, total production and overhead cost per pound of sugar produced was estimated to be $0.201 per pound for a one-fifth share arrangement and $0.193 per pound for a one-sixth share arrangement.

An economic study was completed which estimated the cost differences between whole-stalk and billet sugarcane planting methods in Louisiana. Sugarcane planting costs were estimated for four types of planting systems: hand planting, whole-stalk machine planting, and one-row and three-row billet planting. Planting ratios and labor requirements were determined from data collected from growers using the various planting methods. Whole-stalk planting ratios were 7.5/1 for hand planting and 5.5/1 for machine planting, while planting ratios for billet planters was 3.0/1. Total planting costs per acre of plant cane planted were estimated at $579 for whole-stalk hand planting, $578 for whole-stalk machine planting, $712 for one-row billet planting and $673 for three-row billet planting. Calculations reveal that increasing the planting ratio for billet planters could significantly reduce planting costs. Opportunity costs of increased seed cane acreage were found to be a significant economic factor in the evaluation of billet planters. This study was conducted in cooperation with Dr. Jeff Hoy, Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology, LSU AgCenter, and was published in the 2004 Journal of the American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists.

A study was initiated in 2004 to evaluate the optimal use of a sugarcane bin hauling system. Bins have been shown to be more cost effective as a total system. However, it is not clear as to what is the most optimal (time efficient) use of bins in combination with standard truck and trailer units. A model was developed to minimize total hauling time from farm to mill with quantities of sugarcane hauled to the mill from different combinations of distances. Initial results indicated that, when an insufficient number of bins are available, i.e., only a portion of the total crop can be hauled with bins and the remainder hauled with trucks and trailers, total hauling time was minimized by using the bins to haul cane located close to the mill and using trucks and trailers to haul cane further away. Further work in this area will continue in 2005.

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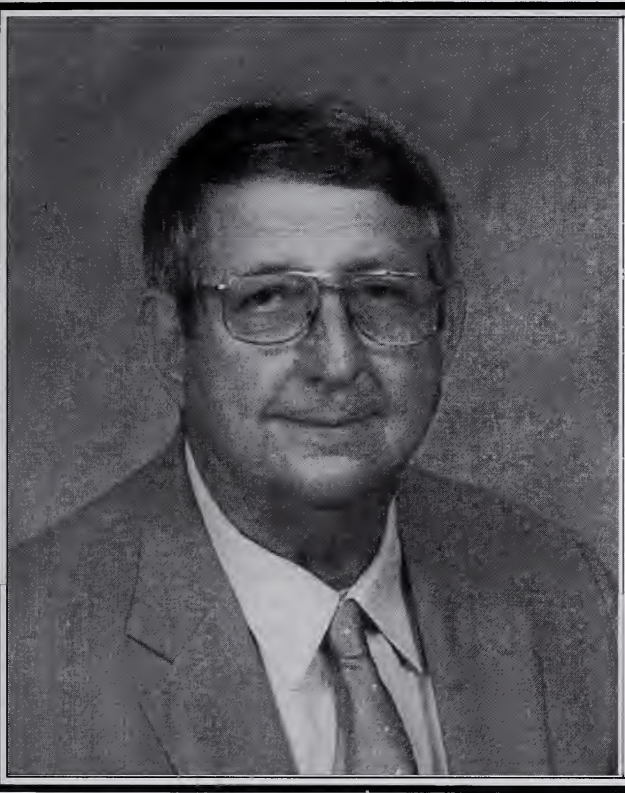

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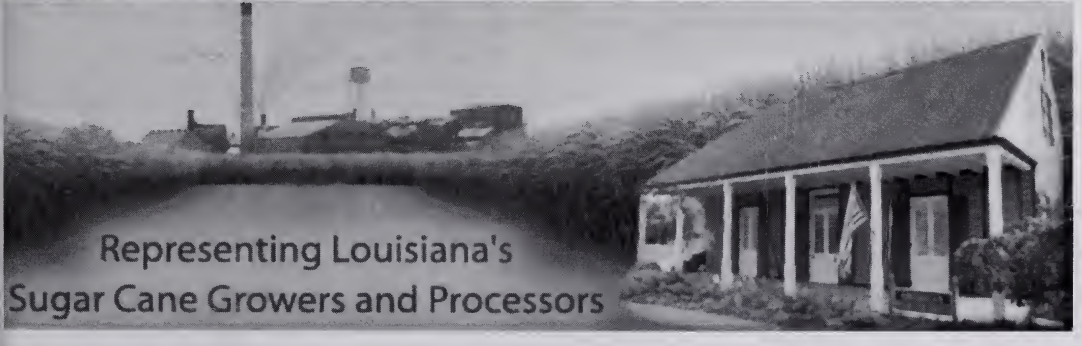

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James H. Simon/Editor and General Manager
Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist

John Constant/Business Manager
Nannette B. Nickens/Administrative Assistant
Paul G. Borron, III/Legal Counsel

Washington Representative
Don Wallace Associates, Inc.
1156 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 331-1331

Editorial and Executive Office
206 East Bayou Road
Thibodaux, LA 70301
Phone: (985) 448-3707
FAX: (985) 448-3722
E-mail: lasugar@amscl.org

Baton Rouge Representative
Spradley and Spradley
11505 Perkins Rd. Bldg. 2, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
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Tommy Thibodeaux, New Iberia, LA
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Dr. Calvin Viator
King Sucrose LXIV

The Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival and Fair Association announced that Dr. Calvin Viator of Thibodaux will reign as King Sucrose LXIV over the annual festival. This year's festival will be held in New Iberia, September 22-25, 2005.

Dr. Viator is a graduate of Franklin High School and the University of Southwestern Louisiana at Lafayette where he received his B.S. degree in mathematics-science education. He received his Master's and Ph.D. degrees from Louisiana State University in Plant Pathology. He taught at Nicholls State University from 1966 to 1996 when he retired as Full Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences.

He has been active as an agricultural consultant for sugarcane growers in the Louisiana Sugar Cane Industry since 1959. He is the owner of the agricultural consulting service, Calvin Viator, Ph.D. and Associates, L.L.C. He is a charter member of the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants' Association and served as its charter president and secretary-treasurer for twenty years. Dr. Viator is a member of the National Association of Independent Crop Consultants where he was named "Consultant of the Year" in 2002.

Other organizations to which he belongs include, ASSCT, American Sugar Cane League, the Louisiana Farm Bureau and the Louisiana Soybean Association.

He is married to the former Barbara Jean (Jeanie) Resweber. They are the parents of four children, Van Viator, Beth Viator Barrilleaux, Miriam Viator Patient and Blaine Viator. Calvin and Jeanie are members of the St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

The American Sugar Cane League congratulates Calvin on being selected King Sucrose LXIV.

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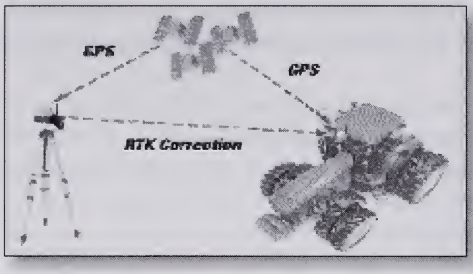
ITS MORE THAN JUST STRAIGHT ROWS!



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Up Front With The League

by Jim Simon

Life Afta CAFTA
Farm Bill
Cane Energy
Thought - Build On It

Last month the American Sugar Alliance held its 22nd annual International Sweetener Symposium. More than 300 Sugar farmers, U.S. Department of Agriculture officials, and members of Congress gathered for the 4-day meeting in Sun Valley, Idaho. The general theme of the meeting was centered on life after CAFTA. Everyone participating agreed on one thing: Future CAFTA - like battles need to be avoided.

Allen Tonelson and Dr. Daryll Day spoke at the conference and both offered interesting comments regarding international trade. In his book "The Race to the Bottom," Tonelson points out that large multinational corporations tend to be the only true winners in trade agreements because they get access to low wages and minimal government regulations in developing countries and access to rich developed-country markets.

University of Tennessee Professor Dr. Daryll Day noted that "Over the past 25 years U.S. commodity exports have remained flat, while food imports into America have exploded. For proof, look no further than the U.S. agricultural trade surplus. It went from a record high of more than $27 billion 10 years ago to being non-existing today."

Next year's symposium will be held in Ashville, North Carolina. The League's Washington representative, Don Wallace will preside over the meeting as he will serve as chairman of the American Sugar Alliance for the next year. We offer our full support and encouragement to Don as he shoulders the responsibility of leading the ASA.

Farm Bill

The current farm bill runs through September 2007. There has been quite a bit of speculation regarding the position of our industry with the administration as we move into farm bill discussion negotiations. General consensus by sugar industry leaders is that we should not see any retribution in the farm bill because of our stance on CAFTA. The realization in Washington is that we did what we had to do and we are respected for standing firm. Several sugar state representatives who voted against us on CAFTA were promised a high degree of influence in negotiating the next

farm bill. Let's hope the administration lives up to these promises.

Cane Energy

Energy consumption around the globe will continue to increase as countries like China and India become more motorized. It is predicted that by 2030 we will have twice as many cars in the world as we do today. It's time to jump on the renewable fuels band wagon as the demand for energy is only going to increase.

The League is currently looking at the potential to create new markets for Louisiana's cane crop. Uses of cane for the co-generation of electricity and for the production of ethanol are two alternatives that merit further study. We are considering a number of avenues to give full consideration to this opportunity. There are many technical, financial and geopolitical issues that we must fully understand in order to adequately determine the long term viability of producing energy from sugar cane.

Thought - Build on it

You know what to expect from yourself. What if you expected a little bit more?

You're comfortable with how much you can accomplish. What if you decided to accomplish a little bit more?

Where you are is a great place to be. Because you can start from where you are and expand upon it.

You can take what you've been doing, and do it a little better. You can take what you know, and use it as a basis for learning more.

There are certain areas of life in which you've been successful. And now you have an opportunity to build on that success.

This place, this moment, this life situation is your starting point. Build on it, and you can go wherever you choose.

— Ralph Marston. Copyright 2005 Ralph S. Marston, Jr., Used by permission. Originally published in "The Daily Motivator" at www.dailymotivator.com.

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Washington Update

By Don Wallace

After CAFTA - Energy Bill Approved
Transportation Bill Approved
Budget Reconciliation in Mid-September
OAQ Announcements
USDA WASDE August Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The House approved CAFTA by a 217-215 vote in late July, holding the vote open for an hour while leadership hammered away at Republicans opposing the agreement. In the end, nine GOP Members previously opposing CAFTA were convinced to vote in favor of the trade pact. Fifteen Democrats also voted in favor, while two Republicans who were opposed did not have their votes counted. Representatives Charlie Melancon (D-3rd), Charles Boustany (R-7th) and Bobby Jindal (R-1st) held strong against fierce lobbying from the Administration and the leadership, and their efforts will not be forgotten. Please take each and every opportunity to let these fine gentlemen and legislators know how much their support meant to the farmers and mill workers in cane country.

In addition, I'm sure that you will have some very pointed questions for Representatives Richard Baker (R-4th) and Rodney Alexander (R-5th), who voted for the CAFTA. While I do believe you deserve some answers, please keep in mind that we will be counting on these elected officials for support in other legislative endeavors of importance to the industry.

To paraphrase the poet, William Ernest Henley, our heads are bloody, but unbowed. Our opposition to CAFTA has left a strong signal to legislators and the Administration that our concerns must be addressed if any trade agreement is to have an easy march through Congress. The Senate vote was, as you may recall, the tightest trade vote in modern history in that body. The House vote was a cliffhanger that many Members will not soon forget, and some may not survive the next election because of their support for CAFTA. Perhaps, with new leadership at USDA and at the USTR, this message will lead to a more inclusive negotiating process in future deals to avoid the pitfalls that awaited CAFTA when it went to Congress.

This is a disappointing loss for the industry and for all of us who have worked so hard over the past two years on this issue, but it would be wrong to look at this battle as the final word on the matter of sugar's inclusion in future trade deals. While voting for the trade pact, Rep. William Jefferson (D-2nd) stressed that he will continue to fight for the industry and that this trade agreement will not be a template for future bilateral and regional trade pacts.

We will not have long to wait to see whether the Congressman is correct. The Administration is working on a bilateral trade agreement with Thailand, the second largest net exporter in the world, and the Thai negotiators have made clear their intention to come away with additional access into the US sugar market. The Thai negotiations are only one of several that the Administration is currently pursuing and the 21

sugar-exporting countries involved produce enough surplus sugar to supply our domestic market four times over.

Energy Bill Approved

After four years of failure, the Congress in late July approved energy legislation that will provide for a 7.5 billion gallon renewable fuels standard that should accelerate efforts to develop ethanol facilities around the country. The bill provides for $36 million for sugar ethanol demonstration projects in each of the cane states, equally divided between the four states. A loan guarantee program is established that would provide loan guarantees for up to $50 million for each eligible project. Under the cellulosic biomass ethanol provisions of the bill, additional loan guarantees are available to develop commercially feasible ethanol production from sugarcane byproducts and other feedstocks, with guarantees applied to up to 80% of the cost of constructing such facilities, but no more than $250 million per project.

Information on the bill, H.R. 6, can be found at: *thomas.loc.gov*

Transportation Bill Approved

The Congress also approved a transportation bill in late July. In case there remains any confusion, the bill does not affect the 100,000 pound weight limit for cane haulers that is in current law. That exemption continues for 100 days during harvest.

Information on the bill, H.R. 3, can be found at: *thomas.loc.gov*

Budget Reconciliation In Mid-September

The Congress will return to Washington, DC, after Labor Day with a heavy workload. Authorizing committees, such as the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, will need to provide the Budget Committees with specific program spending cuts by September 16 to abide by the budget parameters set forth this past spring. For agriculture, this will require cuts in mandatory program spending of $3 billion for FY06, though actual cuts could be as high as $4.5 billion because of $1.5 billion in mandatory spending cuts made by the House appropriators. The sugar loan assessments (i.e. a tax on sugar producers) were included in the Administration's requests and are likely to be a part of discussions in the agriculture committees.

Meanwhile, the appropriators will be completing work on 13 appropriations bills, including agriculture, with hopes of completion by the end of the fiscal year on September 30.

OAQ Announcements

In early August, USDA announced an increase in the 04/05 Overall Allotment Quantity (OAQ) of 250,000 tons, with the 114,125 "cane sector" portion immediately assigned to the import sector. This raised the '05 OAQ to 8.35 million short tons (raw value). At the same time, USDA set the 05/06 OAQ at 8.6 million short tons (raw value). The beet allotment is set at 4,674,000 short tons and the cane allotment is 3,926,000 short tons. USDA assumes that the 120,000 tons of imports eligible under CAFTA will occur in the last three quarters of the fiscal year (January 1-September 30, 2006).

USDA WASDE August Report on US Sugar Supply and Use

The USDA released its August World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. The 2004/05 production was estimated 8,052,000 short tons (raw value) from 8,110,000 tons last month, with Louisiana production lowered to 1,218,000 tons from 1,271,000 tons. Tier II imports from Mexico were increased by another 40,000. Total supply was set at 11,718,000 tons. The stocks-to-use ratio was lowered to 14.1 percent from 14.4 percent last month.

2005/06 beginning stocks were lowered to 1,448,000 from 1,476,000 tons. Total production is lowered to 7,991,000 tons from 8,152,000 short tons, with beet production at 4,282,000 versus 4,433,000 last month and cane production unchanged at 3,709,000. Imports are raised to 1,661,000 from 1,591,000 tons due to a new 70,000 ton CAFTA import projection that raised TRQ imports to 1,276,000. Total supply is projected at 11,100,000 tons from 11,219,000 tons. Exports, deliveries and use were unchanged, resulting in a reduction in ending stocks to 785,000 tons from 904,000 tons last month. The stocks-to-use ratio is 7.6 percent, down from 8.8 percent in July.

On The Farm

By Windell Jackson

Variety Advancement Committee Meeting

At this time the league's staff is processing requests for seed of Ho 95-988. There appears to be only a third as many requests for this variety as there was for the variety distributed last year (L 97-128). Because of the time required to complete the needed correspondence, it will be sometime after the first of September before seed cane of Ho 95-988 can be distributed.

It was the wish of the Advancement Committee that a maximum increase of L 99-226 be replanted on secondary stations. Second stubble data for L 99-226 will be collected in outfield tests this year. Which means that L 99-226 will be eligible for release in 2006. There were early reports that L 99-226 was susceptible to leaf scald, but at this time no other of leaf scald observations have been reported.

In plant cane and first stubble outfield tests harvested in 2004, L99-226's sugar per acre, sugar per ton of cane, tons of cane per acre and stalk weight were significantly greater than LCP 85-384's. The population of L 99-226 was significantly less than that of LCP 85-384. The variety appears to be a very high sugar variety, with more borer resistance than LCP 84-384. Many in the industry were not impressed with L 99-226's early stands. On most all secondary stations and outfield tests upward growth of L 99-226 appeared slow to start in the spring, with the variety having a very sprawled growth in early spring. By mid-June L 99-226 began to have a more erect growth pattern and now it is as tall as other varieties. The variety's early spring sprawled growth pattern provides early shading.

It was the wish of the Advancement Committee that a maximum increase of L 99-233 be replanted on the secondary stations. Second stubble data for L 99-233 will be collected in outfield tests this year and L 99-233 will be eligible for release in 2006.

In plant cane and first stubble outfield tests, L 99-233 yields were significantly higher than LCP 85-384's for sugar per acre, sugar per ton of cane, and tons of cane per acre. The variety is a small barrel high population cane, having stalk weights equal to LCP 85-384. The outfield data collected for 2004 indicated that the population of L 99-233 that was significantly greater than LCP 85-384. L 99-233 is a very vigorous variety that establishes a thick stand with good height early in the spring. This early growth allows the variety to get a jump on other varieties and weed problems. Because of the variety's tall growth it has tendency to lodge early and leave a large amount of scrap.

The Variety Advancement Committee selected one variety for introduction to the secondary stations (HoCP 00-950). In plant cane outfield tests harvested in 2004, HoCP 00-950's yields of sugar per acre, sugar per ton of cane, tons of cane per acre, and stalk weight were significantly greater than the yields of LCP 85-384, with the populations that were equal.

Healthy Seedcane: It's Still Important

Dr. Jeff Hoy
LSU AgCenter Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology

Ratoon stunting disease (RSD) was public enemy number one in the sugarcane industry for many years. It was finally brought under control through a public and private sector partnership that made healthy seedcane produced through tissue culture available and by the release and widespread cultivation of LCP 85-384, a variety with some resistance to RSD spread. Disease monitoring also has been a component of the successful control effort. The Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab has been operating thanks to the support of the American Sugar Cane League and commercial seedcane companies since 1997. The annual testing done by the lab in cooperation with consultants and County Agents has documented the decline in RSD infection levels. The levels now occurring will not affect yield, and this is a major positive development for the industry.

A healthy seedcane program costs money, so if RSD is not around anymore, do growers still need to pay what it takes to keep the program going? At this point, I would argue that the answer is yes, and there are two reasons why. First, RSD is not completely gone. It is persisting at low levels on quite a few farms. Continuing a healthy seedcane program will flush these remnants out and insure that it does not plague you again in the future. The second, and possibly most important reason, to continue a tissue culture based program is that it will control not just RSD but all of the other systemic diseases of sugarcane that are important in Louisiana, including smut, leaf scald, yellow leaf, and mosaic. In comparison, heat treatment will provide good control of smut, moderate control of leaf scald, and little or no control of the virus diseases, yellow leaf, and mosaic.

Two varieties with moderate susceptibility to smut, Ho 95-988 and L 97-128, have been released, so a healthy seedcane program is needed to prevent smut from building up in these new varieties. Smut should not be ignored in these varieties. Mosaic and leaf scald are not problems in LCP 85-384 and do not appear to be in the new varieties, but our newest disease, yellow leaf, is a potential problem. LCP 85-384, Ho 95-988, and HoCP 96-540 are susceptible to infection with yellow leaf. The effect of yellow leaf on yield of LCP 85-384 appears to be minor. The effect on yield of Ho 95-988 and HoCP 96-540 is being evaluated.

Yellow leaf is distributed throughout the state. However, the infection levels within fields and rates of increase from one season to the next are often low. This suggests that we might be able to keep it from building up to uniform high levels in the industry by planting healthy seedcane. Yellow leaf has become a major problem in Florida and other regions of the world. We would like to prevent that from happening here, even if we are looking ahead to protect future varieties. We have

not yet figured out how to breed for resistant varieties, so control will have to be done on the farm. Last year, yellow leaf was added to the seedcane certification standards. The Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab now tests seedcane fields for yellow leaf infection.

RSD testing will continue to be available to farmers without charge. Contact your consultant or County Agent, and they will advise you on which fields to sample and help you collect samples and then deliver them to the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab. So, it requires very little effort and no expense on your part to find out whether RSD is persisting on your farm. Testing can be done any time during the harvest season. Testing your oldest stubble fields of cane going to the mill provides a quality control approach to determine if your healthy seedcane program is working properly.

During a time when input costs are increasing and the future is uncertain, farmers are looking for ways to reduce costs. The cost/benefit relationship of all management practices needs to be considered. Some expenses clearly more than pay for themselves while others are aimed at preventing serious problems from developing in the future. Some practices, such as weed and disease control, can fall into both categories. A farm experiencing a serious weed or disease problem will see immediate returns from investments in herbicides or healthy seedcane. Once these problems are brought under control, further investments are made to prevent the problem from reoccurring. After you get where you want to be, you wish you could stop spending that money. But, it was hard to get there in first place, and you don't want to go back.

Because sugarcane is a vegetatively propagated crop, our most important diseases are seed-borne. A healthy seedcane program represents an expense, but having healthy seedcane will continue to be an important part of maximizing productivity in a sugarcane farming operation.

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The Baton Rouge Line

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

2005 Legislative Session

Timing is everything. The 2005 Legislative session started out with a plea from the Governor for new taxes. Citing a need to fill a medicaid budget hole and a need for an expensive teacher pay raise, she asked legislators to approve a hospital provider tax and, for the teachers, a dollar per pack cigarette tax. A couple of weeks later the Revenue Estimating Conference announced that she would have $360 million more than their previous forecast to spend on this year's state budget. The Revenue Estimating Conference sets the official number of dollars for budgeting and the Legislature is prohibited from exceeding that number. Then, as if to make a point, they did the math and said that along with their previous announcements she would have almost a billion more to spend than she did in 2004.

The last state wide elections held in Louisiana was not kind to those who had taken strong pro-tax stands and the survivors were reluctant to vote for taxes with the "abundant revenue" forecasts from the Revenue Estimating Conference. The hospital tax passed because it was perceived that citizens were remote, if not immune, from the tax. But the cigarette tax failed. The Governor resisted the temptation, for the most part, to get revenge with her veto pen although there were a few non-cigarette-tax voter legislators who feel they were singled out for retribution.

Generally speaking, the most common view of the session from a business point of view is that it was a pretty good session. Nothing really bad passed which is good news, and a few things improved.

Tort was the focus of several bills which sought to expand the list of people with deep pockets who can be sued for the mistakes of others, but all of those bills failed. A couple of narrow interest tort bills passed which provided protections from tort for government and for propane gas companies.

Workforce development programs went mainly unchanged, and a bill to provide "agency shop" provisions (essentially a repeal of right to work) was killed as was a hike in the minimum wage. There was no real tinkering with either Unemployment Compensation or Workers Comp.

New rules were passed regarding the monitoring of ground water, but it remains to be seen if this has any agricultural aspects. Other attempts to increase standards for air quality were defeated in view of plenty of evidence that current standards in Louisiana were adequate.

Several bills passed which affect property tax assessments and related matters. Bills to provide notice to taxpayers if assessments were going up more than 15% and to provide easy access of assessment rolls for taxpayer comparisons were easily passed. A more complex issue involving motor vehicle taxes passed, but since it is a constitutional amendment it will have to pass in a voter referendum. More on this issue in future editions of The Sugar Bulletin.

As they say in school yard basketball - "no blood, no foul." All in all there isn't much to complain about from the session, and a reasonable amount of progress. Not bad!

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Robert Judice, Franklin, LA Since 1999-24 tires, less than 1 flat per year.
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Triple E. Farms, John Earles, Bunkie, LA Since 1997 Runs 28 tires, maybe 2 flats per year
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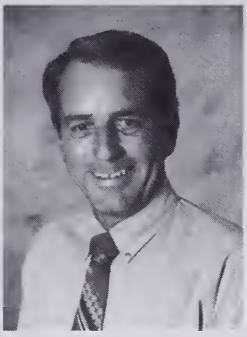

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Suppression of bermudagrass — To aid in the suppression of bermudagrass, apply DuPont™ K-4™ to a firm, well-prepared seedbed that is free from clods or excess plant residue. For best weed control,

Value — Provides broad-spectrum weed control at an economical cost.

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This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product label(s) at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations. Always wear proper protective equipment.

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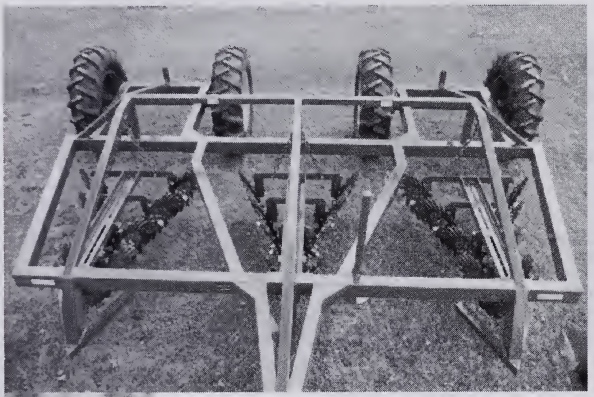

Row Sweeper

Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. The following are the final reports from research during the year 2004.

Research Title: Biology and Management of Red Morningglory (Tie-Vine) in Sugarcane
Lead Scientist: James L. Griffin, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management, LSU Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA

Field studies were conducted to evaluate red morningglory (*Ipomoea coccinea* L.) emergence and growth in response to shade and tillage. Shade boxes were used to provide 0, 30, 50, 70, or 90% shade environments. Red morningglory seedlings emerged from May through September even under 90% shade. Vine length, number of leaves, leaf area, and biomass of red morningglory under 90% shade was equal to that of plants exposed to full sunlight. In the tillage study, red morningglory emergence was recorded from May through September in plots that were tilled monthly and in plots that were undisturbed. In July, red morningglory emergence was equal whether or not soil was tilled. Although red morningglory emergence decreased as the season progressed, significant emergence occurred in both the tilled and non-tilled plots. Results clearly show that red morningglory would be capable of emerging in sugarcane from May through September even when significant shading from the crop occurs. Findings emphasize the need to develop weed control programs that promote maximum residual control from soil-applied herbicides.

The level of residual activity of several herbicides was determined based on red morningglory emergence 5, 7, 9, and 11 weeks after soil treatment (WAT). After each control rating Liberty herbicide (glufosinate), which has only postemergence activity, was applied to control emerged weeds and to allow for determination of residual activity of the herbicides by eliminating weed competition as a variable. Soil type for this study was a silt loam. Red morningglory control 5 WAT was at least 90% with Spartan (sulfentrazone) at 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 oz/A; atrazine at 3 and 4 qt/A; Dupont K4 (hexazinone plus diuron) at 3 and 4 lb/A; Sencor (metribuzin) at 3 lb/A; and Valor (flumioxazin) at 4, 6, and 8 oz/A. By 7 WAT, only Spartan at 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 oz/A controlled red morningglory at least 90%. None of the other herbicide treatments controlled red morningglory 7 WAT more than 71%. At 9 WAT, all rates of Spartan except 3 oz/A controlled red morningglory at least 75% and Spartan at 3 oz/A and Dupont K4 at 2, 3, and 4 lb/A were the only other treatments that controlled red morningglory at least 50%. By 11 WAT, Spartan at all rates except 3 oz/A controlled red morningglory 71 to 76%, but all other treatments provided less than 50% control.

Results clearly show that red morningglory control failures with atrazine are directly related to lack of long-term residual activity. The shift in Louisiana sugarcane to earlier herbicide application at layby (early to mid-May as opposed to late May and early June) has only worsened the problem. For most effective red morningglory control at layby, herbicide application should be delayed as long as possible. The long residual activity with Spartan makes it an excellent choice as a layby herbicide. Research is underway to evaluate morningglory/tie-vine control in sugarcane when herbicides with preemergence and postemergence activity are applied as directed treatments in late June and early July when sugarcane is jointing.

Note: This research represents a portion of the thesis project for Curtis Jones, Research Associate and graduate student, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management.

Research Title: Alternatives to Tillage/Herbicide Programs in Fallowed Sugarcane Fields

Lead Scientist: James L. Griffin, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management, LSU Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA

Failure to effectively control bermudagrass and johnsongrass in fallowed sugarcane fields can have an economic impact on both the plant cane and stubble crops. A study was conducted at St. Gabriel, LA, in a fallowed sugarcane field to compare conventional tillage/herbicide programs with that of a no-till program where Roundup UltraMAX was used to kill sugarcane stubble and weeds. Another study conducted in Henderson, LA, evaluated only conventional programs. At both locations, standard herbicide programs at planting and throughout the first production year were used to allow for direct comparison of the effectiveness of the fallow treatments.

At St. Gabriel, weed control and sugarcane and sugar yields were each equivalent for the conventional and no-till fallow treatments. Therefore, effectiveness of the fallow weed control programs was based on economics where net returns (NR) were compared to the standard tillage-only program (NR=$0.00/A). Based on inputs and sugar yield, the most economical fallow program was the combination of four tillage operations and one glyphosate application (NR=$8.23/A). Since weed control and crop yield were not negatively affected when tillage was eliminated, the no-till fallow program was economically competitive (NR=$-1.71/A) when compared with a tillage only fallow program.

At Henderson when a tillage alone program was used in fallow, bermudagrass ground cover was 73% 247 days after sugarcane planting (DAP). In contrast, bermudagrass groundcover was no more than 5% when tillage and Roundup UltraMAX were used in fallow. Sugarcane shoot population 36 and 247 DAP was not negatively affected regardless of the conventional fallow program used, but by August of the first production year sugarcane height and stalk population were less when only tillage was used in fallow. When bermudagrass was not controlled in fallow, sugarcane and sugar yields were reduced around 40% compared with the other conventional programs. Even though the tillage alone fallow program was the lowest cost input program ($34.00/A), the significant sugar yield reduction resulted in net returns of $216 to $291/A less than when tillage and Roundup UltraMAX were used in fallow.

Other experiments addressed control of LCP 85-384 sugarcane in a fallowed field with various rates of glyphosate and with various glyphosate formulations. Maximum control 45 days after treatment (DAT) was achieved when Roundup UltraMAX was applied at 25.6 oz/A (1.0 lb ai/A) to 6 to 12 inch tall sugarcane (94% control). When application was delayed until sugarcane was 18 to 24 inches tall, 51 oz/A of Roundup UltraMAX was needed to obtain 95% control. Sugarcane was controlled 88 to 94% 38 DAT with all glyphosate formulations applied at 2.0 lb ai/A to 8 to 10 inch sugarcane (Roundup WeatherMAX and Roundup OriginalMAX at 46.5 oz/A, Roundup UltraMAX at 51 oz/A, and Mirage and Honcho Plus at 64 oz/A). In a no-till system, less expensive glyphosate formulations and lower rates could be used to decrease input cost without sacrificing sugarcane destruction.

Note: This research represents a portion of the thesis project for Luke Etheredge, Research Associate and graduate student, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management. Dr. Mike Salassi, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness provided the economic analysis.

Research Title: No-Till Sugarcane - Agronomic and Economic Implications

Lead Scientist: James L. Griffin, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management, LSU Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA

In Louisiana sugarcane, tillage is used extensively to control weeds, eliminate ruts caused by harvest, destroy residue from the previous crop, and incorporate fertilizer. A common perception is that tillage also stimulates sugarcane regrowth in the spring by warming the seedbeds. The effect of tillage and weed control programs on 'LCP 85-384' sugarcane growth and yield and on economics was evaluated over two growing seasons. In this study residue remaining from harvest of the previous crop was not a factor affecting sugarcane regrowth. When row shoulders and middles were not tilled in March, soil temperature in the sugarcane drill early in the growing season was equal to that where March tillage was performed. Weeds were effectively controlled with a March application of DuPont K-4 at 4 lb/A broadcast

(2 lb/A banded). Sugarcane and sugar yield were each equivalent for the full season tillage (off-bar tillage in March plus layby tillage in May) and the no-till programs. Elimination of a single tillage operation reduced cost $6.59/A and herbicide applied on a band rather than broadcast reduced cost $12.34/A. For the no-till program with herbicide banded in March compared with full season tillage, net return was increased $13.18/A. In a subsequent study conducted at five locations sugar yield was increased 8.6% and net return was increased $61.79/A when sugarcane was not tilled in March. Sugar yield was increased 8.0% and net return was increased $58.23/A when layby tillage in May was eliminated.

Crop residue deposited on the soil surface as a consequence of using chopper harvesters can affect regrowth of sugarcane following the winter dormant period and efficiency of spring tillage. Mechanical removal of crop residue using a Sunco Trash Tiger® three weeks after harvest of LCP 85-384 with a chopper harvester was compared with burning. Tillage efficiency in March was not reduced when the residue was mechanically removed from the row top and placed in the row middle. Sugar yield was reduced an average of 7.9% when sugarcane residue was not removed compared with mechanical removal or burning in December. Research was also conducted to compare mechanical removal of sugarcane residue with the Trash Tiger® in January, February, or March. Allowing crop residue to remain on the soil surface until March reduced both early season sugarcane height and shoot population when compared with December residue removal. Sugar yield was equivalent when crop residue was removed in December by burning or mechanically and averaged 7,740 lb/A. Delaying mechanical removal of residue until February or March decreased sugar yields an average of around 13% compared with December burn or mechanical removal.

Note: This research represents a portion of the thesis project for Wilson Judice, graduate student, Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management. Dr. Mike Salassi, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness provided the economic analysis.

VARIABLE-RATE NITROGEN MANAGEMENT OF SUGARCANE

Lead Scientist: H.P. Viator and R.G. Downer, LSUAgCenter

Site-specific management of sugarcane has lagged behind other commodities because of the unavailability of commercial yield monitors. Measures of spatially variable soil attributes associated with sugar cane yield have been both inconvenient and limited. The principal objective of this study was to determine the response of plant cane to the application of variable rates of fertilizer nitrogen. An ancillary objective was to investigate the relationship of yield to measured soil attributes. Four N rates (0, 80, 160 or 240 pounds/acre) were superimposed in a randomized block design on a 25-acre plant-cane field on which apparent soil electrical conductivity (EC_a) and soil nutrient levels were measured. The soil had a silty clay loam surface layer and clay subsoil. Without a workable yield monitor, plot weights were measured using a field wagon equipped with electronic load cells. The 2004 growing season was characterized by moisture extremes, with excessive rainfall occurring in the spring, followed by a moisture deficit during the grand growth stage of summer. A multi-source regression was fit to the plot data. The three applied N rates were statistically equivalent and significantly higher in sugar per acre than the 0 lb/acre rate. Blocks (approximate surrogate for clay content), N application rates, average EC_a of the plots, soil sodium and the interaction of average EC_a and soil sodium were all significant in a model that explained 92 percent of the variability in sugar per hectare. This significant interaction is consistent with visual displays of EC_a and soil sodium for the experimental region and consistent with our understanding of the typical effect of these variables on yield. This model was used this May to apply a prescription for a variable N rate investigation on the first stubble crop of the cycle. As is typical of seasons with exceedingly uneven moisture regimes, sugarcane underperformed on areas of the field with higher clay content (% clay ranged from 20.8 to 60.8 within the experimental area). Management options useful for mitigation of this dilemma are limited. The results suggest that the ability to predict the response of sugar cane yield on clay soil to nitrogen fertilizer is undermined by the inability to predict growing season climate. The data also suggest, as others have observed with different crops, that EC_a alone cannot be used to predict variation in sugarcane yield. Collateral observations and

information must be included in the development of fertilizer prescriptions. We are encouraged by the results of this experiment. Adoption of variable-rate N management in sugarcane should lead to more closely meeting crop needs, reduce the chances of environmental insult and increase profitability.

Summary of Breeding and Management Research with Sugarcane at the Iberia Research Station in 2004 *Lead Scientist: H. P. Viator, Iberia Research Station*

LSU AgCenter and USDA Breeding Nurseries

Experimental clones were evaluated in seven LSU AgCenter and seven USDA breeding nurseries and "infield" tests located within the Bayou Teche Region. Each of these tests contain up to 100 clones, replicated twice. Selections from these nurseries are advanced to the statewide outfield testing program. Outstanding clones are also useful as parents in the recurrent selection program. This is undoubtedly the most important work we do for the industry at this unit.

Long-term Combine-trash Study

Second stubble of the second cane cycle of a long-term study of the effects of combine-trash management was harvested in 2004. Of particular interest are the changes in soil fertility over time and the effects of residue management on successive crop cycles (plant cane through final stubble). Cycle two second stubble yields were 5,791, 4,722 and 4,680 pounds of sugar/acre for the standing burn, physical trash removal from row tops and full trash retention treatments, respectively. Their ranking is consistent with treatment effects for the previous harvests (averages of all crops in both cycles for the three treatments are 7,294, 6,771 and 6,257 pounds of sugar/acre (P=.01), respectively). Sugar per acre trend lines for the six crops across two cycles of production clearly show that retained residue lowers productivity on the average and that burning the crop standing prior to harvest produces the highest yields consistently.

Fallow-period Management Study

A study comparing conventional management, soybean production and no tillage/harvest residue retention during the fallow period was completed for the plant cane crop. The results indicate that comparable yields of plant cane were achieved following each of the three fallow-period management approaches. The ability to maintain productivity without the use of tillage and with the retention of the harvest trash blanket during the fallow period makes for a soil conservation friendly, low-cost approach to fallow-land management.

Influence of Fallow-land Management on Plant Cane			
Fallow management	Tons of cane/acre	Pounds of sugar/acre	Stalk population
Conventional	30.7	7659	49,600
Soybeans	30.0	7588	52,098
No-till/Residue	31.3	8014	47,103
LSD .05	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
C.V. %	7.8%	10.5%	17.2

Summary of Activities in the LSU AgCenter's Sugarcane Variety Development Program
Lead Scientist: Kenneth Gravois, St. Gabriel Research Station

The primary objective of the LSU AgCenter Sugarcane Variety Development Program is to contribute to the profitability of the Louisiana sugarcane industry by developing improved sugarcane varieties. The process begins with crossing. In 2004, photoperiod treatments, used to induce flowering, began on May 31 and continued until September 10. Flowering in 2004 was excellent, with 404 crosses being

made. Germination tests were conducted in December and January. Seed production for 2004 was more than adequate based on germination test results, with more than 346,886 true seed produced.

A total of 92,598 seedlings from 211 crosses of the 2003 crossing series were planted in the field in the April of 2004. A total of 89,104 seedlings survived transplanting. In addition, 4,215 seedlings were planted in a cross appraisal trial. The majority of the seedlings were from crosses of commercial varieties and elite experimental varieties. Selection will be carried out in 2005 when these seedlings are in the first stubble crop.

In the fall of 2004, individual selection was practiced on 50,951 first-stubble seedlings that represented the 2002 crossing series. Family selection (top 79.6% in 2004) was utilized based on information from the cross appraisal study. Of the 40,577 clones, 2,742 were selected and planted to establish the first-line trials.

Established procedures were used to advance superior clones of the 2001 crossing series from first-line trials to second-line trials (773 clones) and of the 2000 crossing series from second-line trials to increase trials (311 clones). After preliminary ratings for cane yield and plant type were done in August, clones with acceptable ratings were further evaluated for lodging, borer damage, presence of disease, presence of pith/tube, and Brix/sugar per ton.

The best 38 experimental varieties from the 1999 crossing series were assigned permanent variety designations in the fall of 2004. Newly assigned varieties were entered in replicated nursery trials at three locations (St. Gabriel Research Station, USDA-ARS Ardoyne Farm, and Iberia Research Station). "L", "HoCP, or Ho" varieties of the 2004 series were exchanged in the fall of 2004 to plant cooperative infield and nursery tests the following year.

Experimental varieties were replanted in infield and nursery tests (14 varieties of the 2003 assignment series), introduced to the outfield tests (four varieties of the 2002 assignment series), and planted in outfield tests (two varieties of the 1999 assignment series; one variety of the 2000 assignment series; two varieties of the 2001 assignment series). Breeding personnel assisted Dr. Jeff Hoy and Dr. Gene Reagan to enter experimental varieties in the sugarcane smut and sugarcane borer resistance trials, respectively.

The decision regarding the further testing and seed increase of candidate varieties was determined at the Variety Advancement Committee meeting. The 2004 meeting was held on August 13, 2004 at the American Sugar Cane League office in Thibodaux, Louisiana.

Table 1. Number of "L" varieties by assignment series at the most advanced stage of testing in 2004.

Series	Stage of Testing	Number of experimental varieties
L 1999	Outfield – Replanted and harvested as plantcane and first stubble Off-station nurseries – 3rd stubble harvested	2
L 2000	Outfield – Replanted and harvested as plantcane On-station nurseries – 3rd stubble harvested Off-station nurseries – 2nd stubble harvested	1
L 2001	Outfield – Planted On-station nurseries - 2nd stubble harvested Off-station nurseries – 1st stubble harvested.	2
L 2002	Outfield – Introduced On-station nurseries 1st stubble harvested Off-station nurseries plantcane harvested	4
L 2003	On-station nurseries plantcane harvested Off-station nurseries planted.	14
L 2004	Assignment - On-station nurseries planted	38

Obituaries

Vincent Paul "Vinnie" Campesi, a loving husband, son, brother, uncle and friend, he was entrusted to God's loving care on Wednesday, July 27, 2005, at 10:23 p.m. in Baton Rouge. Services were held on Saturday, July 30. He was 52, a sugar-cane farmer and a resident and native of White Castle. He is survived by his loving wife of 17 years, Dolores LeBlanc Campesi, White Castle; three brothers, Dominick Campesi and wife Celeste Darcé, Jervis Campesi and wife Theresa Hidalgo, and Charles Campesi Jr. and wife Shirley Hidalgo, all of White Castle; sister-in-law, Betty S. Campesi, White Castle; a brother-in-law, Herbert LeBlanc Jr. and wife Brenda Montz, Belle River; two sisters-in-law, Elaine LeBlanc Redmon and husband Paul, Thibodaux, and Melissa LeBlanc Ventress and husband Darrel, Baton Rouge; mother-in-law, Lena Canella LeBlanc, White Castle; and a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and godchildren; a lifelong friend, Richard Davis, Cannonburg; and business partner, Ross Campesi Jr., White Castle. He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles V. Campesi Sr. and Mae Lena Daigle Campesi; a brother, Joseph J. Campesi; and father-in-law, Herbert J. LeBlanc Sr. Vinnie loved hunting, traveling in his RV, cooking, bowling and tailgating for LSU sports. He was a member of Bayou Goula Hunting Club.

Charles Clarence Savoie Sr., past-president of Savoie Industries and Dugas & LeBlanc LTD., and past head engineer with Lula and Westfield Sugar Factories in Belle Rose, died on Friday, July 29, 2005, at his home in Baton Rouge. He was 93, born on Jan. 13, 1912, in Belle Rose, and spent most of his life there. He graduated from St. Joseph Commercial Institute, Donaldsonville, in 1930, attended Tulane University, Delgado Trade School and graduated from LSU in 1936 with degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering. He was past-president of the American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists and American Sugar Cane League, chairman of the board and senior engineer of the Fresh Water District of Assumption Parish, former board member of Assumption Bank and Trust Co., and the Bank of Commerce. He served as King Sucrose XVIII of the Sugar Cane Festival in New Iberia. He was a member of St. Jules Catholic Church, Belle Rose, and Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, Baton Rouge, the Knights of St. Gregory and the Knights of Columbus. He is survived by his wife of six years, Charlotte Lachiottte, Baton Rouge; three sons and daughters-in-law, Clarence J. II and Penny Francis Savoie, Paincourtville, Charles C. Jr. and Kathleen Naylor Savoie and Rufus H. and Karen Granier Savoie, all of Belle Rose; and eight daughters and five sons-in-law, Beverly S. Hunley, Covington, Ida S. and Marty Edlefsen, Thibodaux, Charleen S. and Dr. James Holder, Gardnerville, Nev., Prados S. Richard, Baton Rouge, Suzanne S. and James Tierny, Lafayette, Renee Savoie, Youngsville, Dr. Lucie S. and Dr. John Elfervig, Germantown, Tenn., and Marie S. and Sam Berry, Belle Rose. He is also survived by a brother, Felix H. Savoie Sr., Baton Rouge; sister, Mildred S. Daigle, Paincourtville; 37 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his first wife of 61 years and mother of his children, Ursula Prados Savoie; parents, Hon. C.J. Savoie Sr. and Celine Dugas Savoie; two sons-in-law, Burt H. Hunley and Patrick Richard; two grandchildren, John Lars Elfervig II and Angel Rebecca Berry; four brothers, Sabin J. Savoie, Clarence J. Savoie Jr., Felix J. Savoie and Joseph Savoie; and three sisters, Sartola S. Cancienne, Isabel Marie Savoie and Adeline Marie Savoie. Services were held on Tuesday, August 2. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jules Catholic Church in Belle Rose, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in Baton Rouge or a charity of your choice.

Obituaries may be sent to LaSugar@amscl.org. for inclusion in The Sugar Bulletin. Publishing deadline is the 15th of the each month for printing in the next month's issue.

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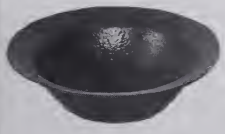

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S-30 Cameco Harvester; **SP-18 Off-set Loader** with ditching attachment; **Thompson Loader**, 4WD with ditching attachment; **2- Hydraulic Billet Wagons**; **2 Billet Hauling Wagons**; **2 Whole Stalk Transloader Wagons**; **40' Billet Side Dump Trailer**; **3 3-row Choppers**, 2 with off-bars and shields; **21' Flat Chopper,** 490 IH; **1988 and 1979 Tractor Trucks**. Call Lynn Breaux at 337- 201-1899 day.

Sugarcane 3-Row Louviere Billet Planter; Used 1 season; for sale with or without running gear. Call Todd Landry at 337-352-0201.

1985 International Cabover Diesel Truck, has A/c, power steering and 5th wheel - $5,000; **3-row Cane Packer** - $400. Call Allen Oubre, Sr. at 337-394-4146 or 337-224-2952.

3-Row Billet Planter - Proven - $10,000. Call 225-265-4452.

2002 CHT 3500. Call Huey Dugas & Sons, Inc. at (337) 394-3305, (337) 201-1193, (337) 201-6014, or (337) 201-6015.

2001-17' Northwest Tiller, model DHC 204SC, excellent condition. Call Davis Callegan at 225-545-8325 (home) or 225-337-0149 (cell).

2003 CHT 3500, eng. hrs. -820, elev. hrs - 520; **3 Cameco 10 ton Dump Wagons**. **One set of portable truck scales**; **2- 2002 Peerless Chip Vans**. Please call Allen at 318- 481-4754 (cell) or 318-776-9216 (home)

(2) Vikings Side Dump Trailer - 1999 Models. Call David Brunson at 318-346-2565 or 318-201-3144.

8' wide, 24 long, Louviere **Whole Stalk Automatic Planters**; 233 Broussard **2-row Cutter**; **2001 CH2500 Cameco Combine** with 12.5L, JD engine; **1999 Rome 3-row Cultivator** with Shields and Off-bars; **JD 3-row Cultivator**; **Broussard Single-row Self Propelled Cane Loader** with Cleaning bucket. Call Nolan at 337-319-0763 or 337-365-2516.

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4 - 1997 High Lift Sugarcane Dump Wagons, 8 - 10 ton with walking beam axles on 18.4 x 30" tires - $10,000 each; **Prime Heavy Duty 3-Row Chopper,** 3 years old, excellent condition; **1998 Austoft Sugarcane Harvester.** Call Bill at (337) 302-4430 or (337) 893-6001 (home).

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